THE PRIEST

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Currente Calamo

Ex-Priests

THE publisher of this magazine has the character-sketch of the apostates who are publishing **The Converted Catholic,** and any priest might have it for the mere asking.

The magazine referred to was sent last year to every member of Congress, and one who had been connected with it told Clare Boothe Luce that it is being sent to nearly all preachers in the United States. It is doing vast harm on that account, because the minister is naturally inclined to suppose that the stray priests are writing in good faith when they uphold the Protestant position in nearly everything, and represent that they left the Church because they could no longer defend the Catholic position.

Of course, we know that they were all in bad faith, that they did not leave the Church but were put out of it.

What About It?

AS we noted last month extraordinary interest was shown in the proposal made by Lon Francis in the October number of **The Priest** for the establishment of a National Bureau of Information, for the benefit of inquirers, and for the invaluable service it would render to pastors and heads of lay organizations by mailing to them refutations of falsehoods and misrepresentations carried in the secular press, as well as the correct Catholic position towards current religious, moral, and social matters—the same to be re-mailed by

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local people to the publishers of local newspapers and to members of the State and Federal Legislatures.

Several religious bodies, as well as the Masons, have long had such a service, and it is more anti-Catholic than pro-Protestant or Masonic.

What do you think about it?

That Apostolic Union

IN December we threw out a feeler for information on the Apostolic Union of Secular Priests. We were informed, practically instantaneously, that it has been written up in

1. **The Catholic Encyclopedia, I,** 643-4

2. **The A.E.R., VII,** 200-17 (Sept., 1892)

3. **The Homiletic Review, XXV,** 510-2 (Feb., 1925)

Needless to say, our relation to this superfluity of information made us feel very dumb. Nevertheless, for those of our readers too tired to reach out for the Encyclopedia, we submit the following:

The Apostolic Union is a genteel but apparently a very effective way of urging observance of a private rule by the diocesan clergy. A printed chart is available to members on which they mark their fidelity to or lapses from their various daily exercises (meditation, spiritual reading, rosary, visit, etc.). This is forwarded monthly to a spiritual director—one's name is not disclosed—who returns it with appropriate comments.

THE PRIEST **JANUARY, 1949** **VOL. 5, NO. 1**

"Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching: be earnest in them. For in so doing, thou wilt save both thyself and those who hear thee."
First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy (iv. 16)

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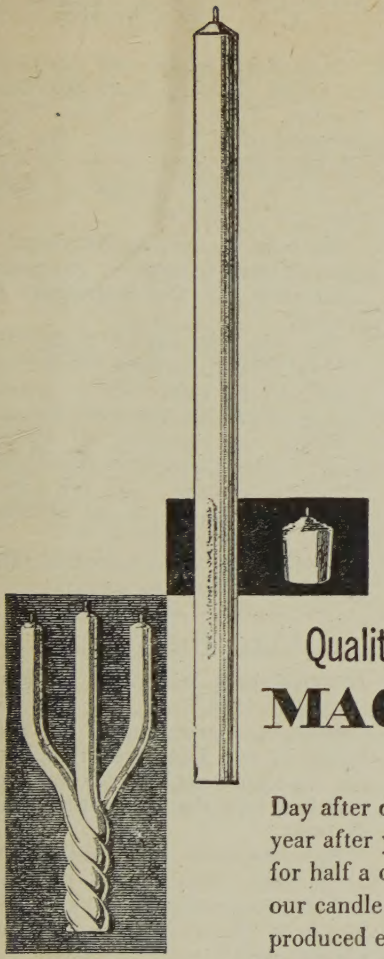

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Want the Index?

"THE best laid plans of Mice and Men," etc. — We had planned to incorporate the 1948 Index in our December issue but for various weighty reasons the idea had t be abandned—this time, at least.

However, it is now available in a separate fascicle and may be had by any subscriber who will just take the trouble to drop us a post card.

Dog-Gone

YOUR Dog can now obtain a full scale funeral with everything but paid mourners for $1,000. We read this and a lot of other tripe recently in a Dog-lovers journal. (After reading the article we feel the word merits a capital letter.)

Continued on page 66

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Translated by Sister M. Timothea Doyle, O.P.

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Father LeBuffe continues: "He has done his work superbly . . . Now for the first time the Catholic reader has an Old Testament he does not need to attack like a jig-saw puzzle." If you would like to see the whole review, ask us for a copy of our December Trumpet. In this you will also see most of the articles on Knox that appeared in *Time* and *Newsweek* the week the Old Testament was published. Nobody can say we don't have fun. Here is a piece of yet another review:

"The great value of a translation such as this is that it induces one to read the deplorably neglected Old Testament again, and to do so with close attention and relish. Here the Creation, the trial of Adam and Eve, the Fall and its aftermath, the history of the children of the first parents of our race, are set forth with clarity and force of a degree which only a master translator could command. Then comes the election of Abraham and thereafter the whole sweep of Jewish history, with its turbulence, trials and triumphs all governed by Israel's relations with God and all shaping towards, and in a hundred ways shadowing forth, the Savior of the new and eternal dispensation."—Rev. John S. Kennedy. *(A postcard on all the Knox translations of Holy Scripture may be had on request.)*

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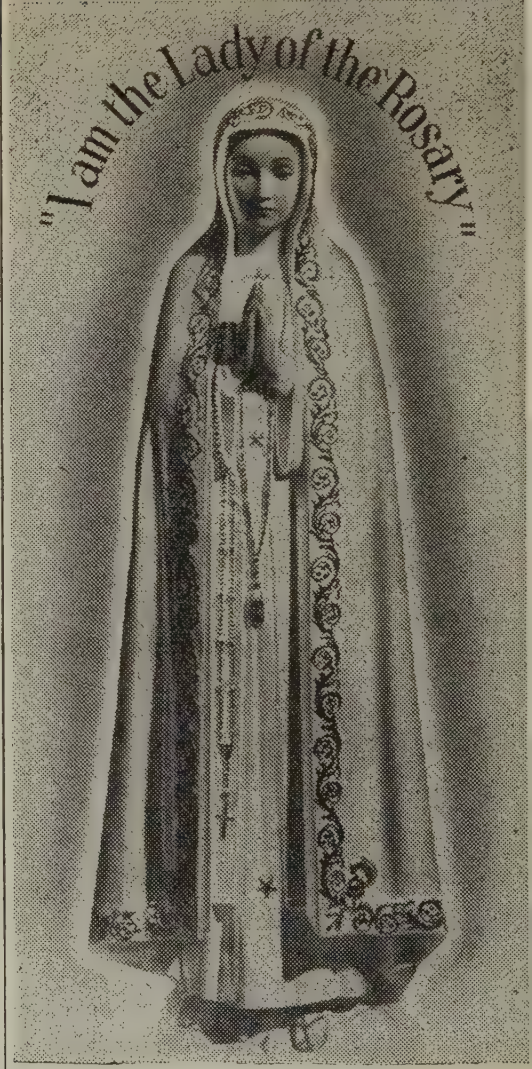

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the PRIEST

VOL. V JANUARY, 1949 NO. 1

Editorial Comment

The Old Testament in English

WE have before us two evidences that the near future will bring us a worthy version of the Old Testament in English to replace as our standard the obsolescent edition of Bishop Challoner. We are certain to have one new version; we may have two. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine has just published its new translation of Genesis, the first fascicle of *The Holy Bible* which it promises. Almost at the same time Msgr. Knox offers us the first volume of his translation of the Old Testament, his second volume being already in the hands of the printer. In either case the assurance are real, if not complete, that we may not have to wait long for an edition of the Old Testament that we can read. That is a blessing many years delayed, and on that account all the more a cause for rejoicing.

The very fact that these books are actually in print gives us a sense of satisfaction, as when we witness the answer to our prayers, and a feeling of confidence that once the venture has been made it must be carried to completion. Neither, it is true, marks the end of the road. The Confraternity Genesis is only the first book of the Bible, and but a fraction of the entire Old Testament. It takes its bow rather as a sample of what we may expect of the completed task; yet it is in itself a finished product.

Msgr. Knox claims for his book nothing beyond a trial performance, a dress rehearsal. With it he is asking for criticism of this attempt, views that might lead to a better and more permanent offering.

Though the one is fragmentary and the other tentative, here is definite promise of a better future for our vernacular Scriptures; yes, here we inaugurate a new era in the story of the Catholic Bible in English. This is true in its fullest sense of the version of Genesis presented by

the Confraternity; though either effort has enough in it to warrant our being sanguine. We are at last about to displace the Challoner tradition which has bound us for the past hundred and fifty years.

Books with such significance merit a gracious welcome. Since they deal with the Scriptures they will meet with careful study and keen criticism, with popular and superficial evaluation. Their first and almost simultaneous appearance invites the following few remarks indicative of their character and expressing something of the impression they make.

They will, of course, be received *secundum modum recipientis:* the scholar probably will not be excited by them, since the Old Testament is no mystery to him, and since he feels little reliance upon a vernacular version; the non-professional reader will have every reason for deeper concern, for they constitute for him the entrance upon a considerable portion of the Bible. Again, the scholar will express his opinion to a limited audience, and with limited effect; whereas the average reader will be the final judge, determining for either a prosperous career or an early failure. The views expressed here will have to be more in the way of a preliminary introduction, and as objective as views can be when dealing with such a subject.

In a review such as is here intended we fortunately are not held to personal or subjective opinions; there are objective standards which permit us to determine at least in a general way whether the version is shaped after the due pattern. In fact, the trend of biblical studies, the exigencies of the times, and especially the counsel and directives of the Holy See, have fashioned for us some very definite norms.

The very first of these is that a version of the Scriptures must be taken from original sources —that is, from the languages in which the books were first written. Then it must avail itself of all the aid provided by recent biblical research and scholarship, particularly of sound scientific criticism, whether textual, literary or historical. It must, further, be couched in the existing vernacular, there being no such thing as Bible English; yet the style must be worthy of so elevated a subject. Finally, since the Church is so jealous of her protectorate of the Scriptures, a version that is sponsored by the hierarchy enjoys at least a great advantage. If examined in the light of these principles, our new versions should reveal their true natures.

From the first of these considerations, the basic text, the Confraternity version merits great respect. It is taken directly from the Hebrew, and from a text critically examined with the help of the other early witnesses to the original. This is an interesting departure from

our English traditions, but this is not the place to discuss how it came about. It is sufficient to observe that after the *Divino afflante Spiritu* of Pope Pius XII it became neither necessary nor advisable to rest our vernacular Bible upon the Latin Vulgate. Rather, to adhere to the Latin, particularly in translating the Old Testament, however extensively it be corrected, is to multiply difficulties both for the translator and for the reader. The Hebrew as preserved in the Massoretic text is not perfect; yet when it is improved with the aid of other ancient witnesses it unquestionably gives us the closest approach to what was written by the hagiographers.

The Confraternity work is based upon such a restored original. It carries an appendix of critical notes from which we may infer that its method is sound though decidedly conservative. On the average it departs from the printed Massoretic text some two or three times per chapter; only eight of these corrections are conjectural, about six others being partially so. Even this moderation begets confidence since it eliminates whatever might be purely speculative.

Knox Works From the Vulgate

Msgr. Knox, on the other hand, holds in his Old Testament, as he had in his New, to the Latin Vulgate. This is an unqualified defect. It might also be regarded as inexcusable. It does not reflect the mind of the Church, even the English part of it; and it is not fair to those who will read this book. Further, while correcting the Vulgate, the method followed is short of what it should be. He admits consulting the Septuagint and the Massoretic texts, sometimes giving the latter when it seems better than the Vulgate.

To be thorough he ought to have taken still other earlier witnesses into consideration, and he should have gone much farther in preferring the Hebrew to the Latin. The work, it is true, may have been started before Rome spoke so clearly in favor of translating directly from the languages of the original sources. Still it would not have occasioned much delay to have overhauled what was already done; rather, in spite of the delay, the work would certainly have gained a great deal. One might feel in view of this that, whatever its virtues, in this respect the version begins by being obsolete.

To evaluate the scholarship of either version would carry us beyond the limits set for this review. From the footnotes alone we may conclude that in either case a sincere effort is being made to give us an accurate if not a learned version. Both, let it be said with gratitude, scrap the wrong and useless notes carried in the Challoner revision down even to its last printing. Both, likewise, furnish notes that are helpful, that are supported

by recent scholarly interpretation, that avoid disturbing theories. Here too the Confraternity version has an advantage in that it need not, as Knox on almost every page, show the difference between the Hebrew and the Latin.

But from another direction the Confraternity Genesis begets the greater confidence. Though its translation was done by one man, its final form is attributed to a group of editors with sufficient discretion to permit the introduction of all warranted modifications. The process of cooperation between author and editors was repeated. In any biblical version this is commendable; in a version of the Old Testament it is almost essential.

In contrast with this, Msgr. Knox is practically alone in his work; at least his consultation with others could hardly have reached the same stage of editing. Any opinion of his reflected in the version will be of much less weight than that of the other group arrived at only after much reflection and study.

Episcopal Support

In a third respect the two books are far apart. The version of Genesis is sponsored by the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. Msgr. Knox claims for his work nothing more than "my idea of how the Old Testament ought to be translated." It bears an *imprimatur* but no further ecclesiastical support.

Though produced at the request and under the direction of a group of bishops, the Confraternity Genesis is not thereby constituted an "official text." Yet the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity represents the American hierarchy, and their sponsorship of the new version gives it a voice and a character, an authorization perhaps, that rise above even its intrinsic merit. Subsequent endorsement of a private effort can, of course, lead to a similar authority. Still there is a difference between a text commanded by the Church, and therefore expressing the will of the Church, and one that is adopted because found acceptable. Msgr. Knox's translation has not as yet been honored with this adoption by the English hierarchy, but it probably will be so recognized, as was the case with his New Testament.

A Comparison In Style

One thing the new versions do have in common: in the matter of English idiom they break completely with the Challoner tradition. The Confraternity preface asserts, "the deliberate compromise with earlier usage frequently retained in Bible translations has here been given up." Msgr. Knox has little need to describe his intention in this respect; to read his first few lines is to discover how independent a road he pursues. On either side the ambition is laudable; and we can also acknowledge its issue to be happy.

And yet how different the two versions are in their English expression! Fundamentally their points of view are at variance. Knox abandons the idiom of Challoner, but not its spirit, since he attends mainly to the expression of the thought. The Confraternity version is radically a new translation, concerned not only with modernizing the English, but chiefly with bringing the reader back to the original. This is reflected in either book.

The style of the Confraternity version is simply narrative English, such as one might expect in the telling of any story today, without conscious effort at adornment. Its very sincerity lends it a dignity in keeping with its noble theme. While altogether modern in style, the moderation of this version enables it to retain in an admirable way the flavor of the original without betraying it into awkward English. It gives, for instance, in verse form what is poetic, and in doing so it preserves the parallelism which is so characteristic of the Hebrew.

Msgr. Knox, on the other hand, is, as usual, fresh, bold, venturesome, but perhaps not as markedly so as in his New Testament. But he is also studied, inclined to paraphrase, and disposed to thrust himself into the translation. Curiously enough, he retains the pronouns "thou, thee, thy," together with their verb forms.

In this matter of English expression the two versions are in contrast as the virtues of simplicity may be contrasted with the merits of fluency and involution. There is a further reason for this. The Confraternity translation is taken from the Hebrew directly, from a language altogether lacking the smoothness of our parataxis. Msgr. Knox, himself adept at turning a sentence, takes his from the Latin of St. Jerome which had already introduced western fluency into the Bible. The result has this of interest: it places before us two versions both justly pretending to be modern in idiom, and yet both exhibiting how widely divergent English styles can be.

At least in one respect Msgr. Knox has shown the way to the Confraternity. In nine years he has succeeded in completing a translation of the entire Old Testament, working almost single handed. Neither the brevity of the time, nor the independence of his workmanship have, perhaps, increased the value of his labors. The fact remains that he was able to complete his work.

The group entrusted with the Confraternity Old Testament has been engaged with its task now for some eleven years; and there has been given us nothing but this version of Genesis. The answer lies in the fact that Msgr. Knox has devoted himself solely to this work; while the Confraternity effort is confined to what time busy men can give to it.

An available text is always better than one existing only in promise. If the Confraternity version, so superior in almost every respect, is further delayed, it may find little room or welcome when it does reach completion.

The Purpose of a Vernacular Version

It should not, however, be forgotten that a vernacular version is prepared for the general reader, not primarily for the scholar. The latter may weigh the profounder aspects of the work, but it is the former who will finally act as judge, and who will determine whether any version accomplishes its purpose. That purpose is to get the Bible read.

To achieve this popularly the new version must fulfill three demands: it must use the language men now speak; it must win its way over the version that is in possession; it must meet the requirements popularly made of a version of the Scriptures. On the answer to these will depend whether one or both of these versions will be accepted in the sense of reviving our lost interest in the Old Testament.

To the first of these questions they both give a satisfactory answer. Either will be found to speak the language of the day, though with a quite different accent. Of the two the Confraternity offers the simpler and clearer style, though Knox may appeal more to some. In any event, all objection to reading the Old Testament on the score of its antiquated language seems once for all removed.

Both versions, in the second place, will be novel in more than language when brought into comparison with Challoner's text; and on this account we might anticipate some popular resistance. The danger, however, is effectively reduced by the simple fact that few if any are so familiar with the other version that they might resent its replacement. Few perhaps will even notice how striking the contrast really is. The majority will be reading for the first time a version of the Old Testament that conveys meaning, and in their appreciation may overlook the fact that a change has taken place.

We Must Not Expect Too Much

But on neither of these accounts should we be too hopeful of what a new translation might accomplish in the way of stimulating fresh interest in the Old Testament. A lethargy such as has fallen upon us in this matter will not easily be overcome. Our generation has seen four new versions of the New Testament, and yet, with all their excellence and variety, we cannot say that they have made Bible readers out of us.

Then, too, there will be some disappointment to overcome. Some, thinking that the difficulty of the Old Testament was merely its obsolete idiom, will expect too much of the new version. When they find that even a per-

fectly modern translation fails to make of it a completely open book, they will hardly persevere in their reading. No edition could carry sufficient footnotes to explain every problem in it.

The obscurity that hovers over it is due to many causes, and is inherent in the text itself. The improvement of the English, the study of the text, and the like, will have done much to clarify the books. Still in times like ours when all literature seems to be giving way to picture books, we need not hope for a general adoption of the Old Testament, even when this is urged as a religious exercise.

We may, however, rejoice that in the appearance of these new versions an encouraging start has been made in the correction of a great fault in our system. If the Old Testament has become a forgotten book it is due largely to our having permitted it to become an uninviting and unintelligible book. We may never succeed in totally altering this; but at least something is being done to remove one of the causes.

In the effort, have we added further confusion by presenting the interested reader with two such different versions almost at the same time? They vary so that they readily might excite wonder, wonder as to whether the one or the other is correct, wonder as to whether both may not be wrong. It is, therefore, sincerely to be regretted that the two efforts, both so competent in a way, both so earnest, could not have been joined. At one time, at least, such a union was, from the American side, altogether possible.

If it had been realized we might now be proud in the possession of a translation as thorough and scholarly as that offered by the Confraternity yet with some of the fluency of Msgr. Knox to make it more attractive; we might have a version upon which all the Bishops of English-speaking countries could unite and place before the people as a standard. But since this is not the case, we may only pray that when both are complete, popular judgment may not be permitted to select as our standard a text that is neither sound nor accurate.—W.J.N.

Receive, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the offering we make to Thee on behalf of Thy holy bond of wedlock: and even as this institution is the gift of Thy bounty, so dispose of it according to Thy will. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God."—**The Nuptial Mass.**

If you peel the sheep's clothing off our national economy you find the big bad wolf—national extravagance.—**Kanawha Republic.**

A Penny for the Poor

John Sinnott Martin *Successful experiment*

ON a busy street in any city, you'll see a man or a woman begging pennies. Street-corner Santa Clauses blow on their hands and pot their pennies at Christmas time. It brings results or they wouldn't be there. Old copybooks used to say "Save the pennies and the dollars will take care of themselves." The hitch was that it took so many cents to make a simoleon. The solution is to get enough cents. Most managing priests get too many coppers in collections, too few pennies in the poor boxes. This is so true that many churches do not have the boxes emptied more than once a month. A respectable burglar would not be guilty of working for such a sub-standard salary.

Yet there is a system that helps take the little Lincolns out of the baskets and put them into the boxes in numbers far beyond even sanguine expectations. Worked properly, it works. In one city church with about 4500 attendance, its introduction jumped the charity take from a $17 weekly average to $75. This increased steadily for five years to more than $10,000 a year for the past three years. In a small-parish try-out, which was not followed up, a single Sunday brought increase from the usual 85c to $3.75; continued, it should have produced weekly receipts of nearly $10. In a small parish, this raise of $4,500 a year help can mean a great deal. Properly explained and cultivated, the people like it and the pastor can enjoy it. It is called the Penny-for-the-Poor.

The Penny-for-the-Poor consists in asking each person, without prejudice of age, condition, sex, race or color—or even denomination—to give each Sunday as he leaves church after Mass, a penny for the poor—1c, no more, no less—in the boxes at the doors. This is best placed as a final announcement; people remember it better. It may be omitted when there is a special collection and/or on holydays to avoid too much mention of money. The announcement should be usually brief and frequently varied to avoid monotony. When time allows, people should be kept informed though not *ad nauseam,* about the progress of the system and how it works.

What's The Secret?

It works. But there are different explanations, probably all correct to some extent and for some types of people. Primarily, it's difficult to refuse so small a request. A single penny is almost useless. One would hesitate to offer it even to a child. If you have a penny at

The writer is Pastor of St. Vincent de Paul's Church, Baltimore.

all, you can hardly refuse such a minute gift for the poor. Furthermore, the request is for just a penny; not a minimum penny, but a maximum penny as well. This emphasizes the modesty of the appeal and its almost insignificant amount. That makes it doubly hard to refuse. So trivial is the favor asked that even those who do not have a penny feel ashamed not to give something. This may be a nickel, a dime, a quarter.

But with nearly everybody dropping in something, those who are without the exact amount are unwilling to be conspicuous by passing the boxes without some gift. This raises the intake to several times the estimate that could be based on a cent for every person.

In the large parish referred to above, larger coins about equal the number of pennies. Some hearers are a little resentful at being asked for so small a sum; feel it below their standard; insist on giving more as a matter of self-esteem. And there is a group of independents that are not going to be told what thy shall give or not give. Insist on a dollar and you're lucky to get a dime; insist on a penny and you get more.

Gradually the poor-box habit is formed and will prove effective even on days when there is a special collection and when no mention of the Penny-for-the-Poor is made.

The constant but varied announcement is a necessity. And it helps to take people into your confidence and let them know, bit by bit as time permits, how and why the system works.

Now and then, some little story (not too heavy) or anecdote will enliven the announcement and increase interest. One that everybody liked was about the spider that spent the winter in the poor box without once being awakened.

Some idea of where the money goes is always of interest. Items of good done have their effect. An occasional mention of the amount received on the previous Sunday stimulates interest and principal. Let people know that you get more than pennies; but stick to the fact that you are asking 1c, no more, no less, and that you are satisfied with that small gift. Be frank, too, that you are tempted to pray for a shortage of pennies; but don't yield to the temptation.

Added push may be given by articles about the system in the parish bulletin and the notice boards can be pressed into similar service on occasion. The ingenuity of pastor and assistants and opportunities peculiar to individual parishes will suggest many little ways of helping to promote and maintain the Penny-for-the-Poor.

The idea is free, not patented. But its success in the relatively few places that have introduced

it merits wider adoption. Small church or large, its fair trial will prove its value in supplying adequate funds for much of the parish outlay in financial aid to local and general charities.

JULIE - - - Or Housekeepers Are Hard To Get

"Crossword Puzzles! What are they learnin' them in Seminary these days?"

Effective Preaching

What is the secret?

Hyacinth Blocker, O.F.M.

ANTHONY of Padua (died 1231) had few of the recognized qualities of an orator. According to the Bollandists, he was short and dumpy, inclined to corpulence. He lacked the commanding physique, the dynamic deportment, the ringing voice popularly associated with the missioner. When he climbed the rostrum, he already had, as we say in today's parlance, two strikes against him.

Nevertheless, he possessed what moderns rave about, a magnetic personality. The mere sight of him on the platform, whether in church or in plaza, hushed an audience into rapt attention, and hypnotized hardened sinners to their unhardened knees. But it was not his arresting figure or his booming voice —for he had neither—that prompted merchants to lock their shops when he came to town or lured women to remain overnight in church in order to secure an advantageous place near the pulpit for the morrow's sermon.

What, really, was the secret of his eloquence, of his sway over the people? He was such a powerful and persuasive preacher, all of his biographers say, because he radiated holiness. It was as lucent as the bright sun in the blue Italian sky that here was a man who practised what he preached. People sensed that he didn't tell them one thing and do another. When he spoke about prayer, they understood, with that quick intuition of children, that he prayed first. When he inculcated patience or purity, they realized they were looking upon one who, as far as human effort could attain, was as patient as his Master and as unsullied as his Master's Mother. It was not his words, although they were glowing and gripping enough, that lit the tapers of compunction and struck the fire of fervor in their hearts, but his very life, his daily conduct, what he was.

St. Charles Borromeo

That same magic to win friends and influence people, to borrow Dale Carnegie's often quoted phrase, was wielded by Charles Borromeo (died 1584), and for the same reason. As a public speaker he would have flunked the basic requirements. He had a thin, flat, unmanly voice, and a stuttering impediment in speech that was annoying. "I have often wondered," wrote Achille Gagliardi, a contemporary, "how it was that, without any natural eloquence or anything attractive in manner, he was able to work such changes

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Fr. Hyacinth, nationally known journalist, is now on the Mission Band, stationed in Louisville.

in the hearts of his hearers. He spoke but little, gravely, and in a voice barely audible—but his words always had effect."

The Milan Cardinal convinced others, not by rhetorical acrobatics, carefully memorized perorations, and that amusing cleverness which radio speakers have accustomed modern listeners to, but by the sheer sanctity of his own life. People knew he meant what he said because he believed and lived, consistently and staunchly, what he urged others to do.

Of the Cure of Ars, John Mary Baptist Vianney (died 1859), this was likewise true. Homely and gaunt in appearance, lacking that *copia verborum* which Newman and others consider essential for effective writing and preaching, he could hold an audience in his fingers through the personal holiness that shone, star-like, in his words, tipping them with a flame of unstudied eloquence that pierced and melted the hearts of his listeners.

His confreres, seeking simultaneously an explanation and an excuse for his success, called it a miracle, and let it go at that. But the schoolmaster of Ars better understood wherein the miracle lay. He said, "The most difficult, extraordinary and amazing work that the Cure did was his own life." How could anyone remain cold and unbending when the Cure's daily living, without one word being said, was a reproof to their apathy and a challenge to the pursuit of holiness?

Could the ineffectiveness of some priests in the pulpit be due, not so much to mediocre preparation and callowness, as to the obvious inconsistency between what they preach and how they live? *Nemo dat quod non habet.* "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its strength, what shall it be salted with? It is no longer of any use but to be thrown out and trodden underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Neither do men light a lamp and put it under the measure, but upon the lampstand, so as to give light to all in the house. Even so let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:13-16).

St. Francis of Assisi

Francis of Assisi (died 1226) warned his brethren of the folly of relying too much on knowledge and not sufficiently on personal holiness in their sermons to the people. "They who care only to know and to show others the way of salvation," he counseled, "not walking therein themselves, shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, naked and empty, bearing nothing in their hands save the sheaves of shame and confusion . . ."

As a rule, the average layman is quick to see through pulpit sham. Once, after a mission

in a certain church, a parishioner, commenting on the two speakers, remarked, "That Father Y was surely a good actor. He knew all the tricks. Often he had the people rolling in the aisles with his jokes and pantomime. But you know, most of the people like Father X, the other missioner, much better. He didn't rely upon fireworks. He spoke straight from the shoulder, as much as to say, 'Take it or leave it.' But you could tell he was sincere, that he meant every word he uttered; and there was something reverent and holy about his whole demeanor. After Father Y's sermon they came out of church laughing; but when Father X preached, they left the church silent and thinking."

Louis Bertrand (died 1581), the eminent Dominican orator who trained many excellent preachers in Spain, used to say that the principal preparation of the preacher is humble and fervent prayer. "Words without works," he used to add, "never have the power to touch or to change hearts." Judging from the phenomenal success he had in leading prodigal sons back to their Father's house and revolutionizing the life of Christians around him, he knew from first-hand experience what he was talking about.

St. Alphonsus Liguori

However, personal holiness is not the only qualification necessary for effective preaching. There is simplicity, for example. Alphonsus Liguori (died 1787) was accustomed to tell his brethren: "Your style must be simple, but the sermon must be skillfully constructed. If skill is lacking, it is unconnected and tasteless; if it be bombastic, the simple cannot understand it. I have never preached a sermon which the poorest old woman in the congregation could not understand." After hearing a pompous sermon by one of his priests who neglected this advice, the saint remarked icily, "Your sermon kept me awake all night. If you wanted to preach only yourself, rather than Jesus Christ, why did you come all the way from Naples to Ariola to do it?"

It is stated that Bernardine of Feltre (died 1494) recoiled with diffidence and fright when his Franciscan Chapter appointed him to preach missions. For one thing he seemed physically ill-equipped for the task, being very short in stature; for another, he lacked confidence in himself. When he first went into the pulpit before a large congregation in Mantua, he was gripped with panic; he forgot everything, what he wanted to say, how he had planned to say it, all of his precisely prepared points and periods. From that day forward he never attempted to deliver a memorized sermon. "Prayer," he said, "is a better preparation for the pulpit than study; it is both more efficacious and quicker."

For 25 years he preached throughout Italy, speaking, it is estimated, over 3,600 times. Popes admired the ease with which he reduced theological doctrine to the comprehension of the illiterate; other great preachers of the day praised and, very probably, secretly envied him. All contemporaries agree on the simplicity of his expression, free from rhetorical flourishes. "Ostentation," he often said to others, "never does any good in the pulpit. A sermon of which the thread is frequently broken by fancy quotations, especially from the Latin, does not get across; it moves the soul of nobody."

Blessed Angelo of Acri

Another Franciscan Blessed, Angelo of Acri (died 1739), gave his first Lenten course at San Giorgio. He prepared his talks with exquisite care, generously larding them, as was the custom, with elaborate quotations from ecclesiastical and profane writers; but his sermons fell so flat that in embarrassment he returned to his friary before the course was completed. Meditating on his failure and seeking Divine guidance in his trouble, he seemed one day to hear Christ chiding him for his lack of confidence. "For the future," the Voice said, "preach simply and colloquially so that all may understand you." Angelo did so and became one of the most influential preachers of his day.

Simplicity also stamped the sermons of John Francis Regis (died 1640), the eloquent Jesuit. "Unlike the formal rhetorical sermons of the day," writes Butler, "his discourses were plain—even homely—but so eloquently expressive of the fervor that burnt within him that they attracted enormous congregations, drawn from all classes." One pastor in a French town declared, "After a mission preached by Father Regis, I did not recognize my own parishioners, so completely had his simple talks reformed them." Gallic exaggeration perhaps, but a tribute to a man whose effectiveness in the pulpit flowed from the simplicity with which he spoke.

Living virtuously, trusting in prayer, and preaching simply do not, of course, preclude all other preparation for the sermon, whether it be a ten-minute feverino at an early Sunday Mass or a half-hour disquisition during Lent. The *dabitur vobis* promised by Christ presupposes a receptive soul and co-operation, just as any form of actual grace, to be effective, relies under ordinary circumstances upon a compliant effort by man. Some speakers, like Blessed Francis Patrizzi (died 1328), the Servite orator, could preach magnificent and moving sermons on the spur of the moment, with little or no advance thought. But even they, I imagine, occasionally delivered a dud. Gasper del Bufalo (died 1837), founder of the Sanguinists, required of every member of his congregation who intended to preach, not only devotion

but also hard study. "An extraordinary ministry, such as preaching," he repeated, "demands extraordinary helps."

It was he too, who, exhausted but thankful after a series of sermons, would say, "If it is so sweet to tire ourselves for God, what will it be to enjoy Him!" Preaching, even for the saints, is hard work. But that is the duty of all priests—"to announce . . . the good tidings of the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to enlighten all men as to what is the dispensation of the mystery which has been hidden from eternity in God" (Ephes. 3:8, 9). Surely it must be sweet to tire ourselves in this manner for God. And for reward? "What will it be to enjoy Him!"

The Catholic Church

It is of all religions the most poetical. The ancient superstitions furnished the fancy with beautiful images, but took no hold on the heart. The doctrines of the Reformed Churches have most powerfully influenced the feelings and the conduct of men, but have not presented them with visions of sensible beauty and grandeur.

The Roman Catholic Church has united to the awful doctrines of the one what Mr. Coleridge called the "fair humanities" of the other.

It has enriched sculpture and painting with the loveliest and most majestic forms. To the Phidian Jupiter it can oppose the Moses of Michelangelo; and to the voluptuous beauty of the Queen of Cyprus, the serene and pensive loveliness of the Virgin Mother.

The legends of its martyrs and its saints may vie in ingenuity and interest with the mythological fables of Greece; its ceremonies and processions were the delight of the vulgar; the huge fabric of secular power with which it was connected attracted the admiration of the statesman.

At the same time, it never lost sight of the most solemn and tremendous doctrines of Christianity: the incarnate God, the judgment, the retribution, the eternity of happiness, of torment. —Lord Macaulay.

"A Plague on Both . . . "

One can only conclude that the Cominform charges against Tito's regime and Tito's charges against the Cominform are substantially correct, wish both the worst of luck, and trust that Tito's split with Moscow will lead to disastrous consequences, both for Soviet imperialism in Europe and for Tito's totalitarianism in Yugoslavia.—W. H. Chamberlin in **The New Leader.**

This One Happened to Me

James Anderson *"Too late, Johnny?"*

IT was dinner hour in the rectory—a dinner hour more welcome than usual after the long afternoon of confessions in preparation for the First Friday. But the hour was no more sacred than any other of the hours which pass by in a rectory. The housekeeper had just placed the main course on the table when the doorbell rang. She begged her "charges" keep at their food while it was warm —she would answer the door.

"A man to see one of the Fathers—he says he will wait."

The dinner and conversation over, I went to answer the call. A graying man of about middle age met me at the door of the parlor. His lips held an unlighted cigarette. He was well dressed in a business suit. His tie was well chosen to bring out the color of the suit and the immaculate background of a spotless white shirt. His brown shoes were well shined.

He shook my hand and introduced himself. The clasp was one of those indicative of the beginning of a true friendship. We both sat down. And after the initial break in the ice, came the burden he wanted to unload . . .

He was just released from a penitentiary. It was the third time he had left one of those places—the third time he had been given a "prison suit" with which to go out into the world—the third time he was given the gift of ten dollars to start life anew. Each time he had planned to go straight, and each time society fought against him to deny him the chance to go straight.

When he went to apply for a job, the interviewers questioned him . . . and when they came to THE part, they politely informed him that they would call him when they had an opening.

At one time he wanted to forget about the "old man" so entirely that he destroyed all the identification he carried. Then he went to the city hall with the intention of changing his name and starting out anew. But they had to take his fingerprints—and it was just a matter of minutes before they discovered his secret and labeled him—a man with a record!

The police came for him. They put him on exhibition in the showup. No one recognized him as having killed anyone or robbed any banks. So the police lieutenant politely informed him that there were enough excons in the city, and if he knew what was good for him, he'd get out of town in a hurry or be picked up for vagrancy and be placed in another pen for the nice term of twelve months.

He had had enough of prisons

when he was on the island. So he left the county.

The same story in the next town . . . nobody wanted to help an ex-con. You couldn't trust him. When the interviewer discovered that he had a record, he would reach to see if he still had his wallet . . . and being assured of that, politely usher him to the door.

He needed money. He needed other help. So he had to go to his friends—to the only friends he had. They were criminals, but they would give him the break society would not give him. They bought him the nice clothes he wore. They gave him a bit of "lettuce" to keep him "out of someone else's garden"—at least for awhile. But someday they would want him to help pull a job as recompense—and he didn't want to do that against society—not even the society he knew! Twenty-nine out of fifty years of your life was too much to spend having your head counted every few hours! He wanted to go straight. That's why he had come to see a priest.

A band of women had come into the pen one day to offer religious services. The men were all herded into an auditorium to hear "the message." "Sob sisters," was the unanimous comment. But there had been a priest once . . . and the men liked him. He always talked to you—he never forced himself upon you—he made you feel that you were important—he made you feel that he had something to give—something you needed. He had remembered that. And now, even though he didn't believe in God—even though he didn't believe in an after-life, he wanted to see one of these Other-Christs. He was sure the Other-Christ could straighten out the difficulty with society—stubborn society. Little did he realize that millions of souls might throw themselves into the pits of hell despite the pleas of these Other-Christs.

Tragic Ending

We talked for hours that evening. We settled some things. I thought we settled everything. And then, two months later, I received a letter: "John Doe has made frequent mention of your goodness towards him. He does not know this letter is being written, but he is to be executed on the third of November for double murder. Maybe you can come to console him in his last hours with the comforts of your holy religion."—The letter was signed by the warden.

I made haste to the prison 400 miles away. And when I was brought to the cell I could see that he was bitter—terribly bitter. It sent a chill down my spine. Here he was. And in an hour and a half, he would not be!

"Thanks for coming, Father. But I think you came into my life just a little bit too late. I have only an hour and a half to live. I'm an old man now, believe it or not—a rotten no-

good old man. I shall be better off dead. You have been good to me. But you came into my life just a little bit to late. Yes, Father, about 40 years too late!"

I walked out of the dark prison into the wet foggy night. My mind was deep in thought. Maybe it was dark and foggy too. How many times had priests come too late into the life of a delinquent? I wondered. I wondered and I prayed. I prayed and hoped—for Johnny's sake—that at least this time I was not too late. For, after all, once before another thief stole eternal happiness on the night of his execution, didn't he?

Too late Johnny? I hope it wasn't too late. I hope other priests will not be too late!

15,523 French Missionaries in the World

France continues to rank first among the countries sending missionaries into the Catholic mission fields of the world, as is evidenced by figures just released. These statistics show at present 15,523 French missionaries are active in the various mission territories. Of these 4,502 are priests, 1,919 brothers, 9,102 sisters. The total number of Catholic missionaries of all nationalities is estimated at between 45,000 and 50,000 including 14,000 priests, over 6,000 brothers, and about 27,000 sisters. Americans in Catholic foreign missions number slightly more than 3,000.

The French priests active in foreign missions belong to 41 Orders and Institutes, of which the following are the most important: Foreign Missions of Paris (832 priests), Fathers of the Holy Ghost (563), White Fathers (524), Jesuits (507). The brothers belong to 31 Congregations, the most important being the Christian School Brothers (856) and the Little Brothers of Mary (548). The sisters belong to 110 Orders and Congregations, the most numerous being the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul (968), the Sisters of St. Joseph, of Cluny (744), the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary (598), the White Sisters (537), and the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady Queen of the Apostles (442).—**The Springfield Mirror.**

The Practical Test

Howard Dietz's latest story concerns an inter-denominational convention in a big hall in Chicago. In the course of the opening session, a Baptist lady in one of the front rows got up and called, "Is there a Christian Scientist in the audience?" A cheerful young woman in the rear of the hall answered, "Yes, I am a Christian Scientist." "That's fine! I wonder if you'd mind changing places with me," said the Baptist hopefully. "I seem to be in a terrible draught!" . . .— **Saturday Review of Literature.**

'Author Not in Picture'

Some notes on Thomas Merton

Thomas M. Flynn

TO everyone who reads it is evident that something strange is happening in the English-speaking literary world. Three times in the short space of a few months books by Catholic authors have been received with applause by neutral or even alien critics. The books were good, better than good, but there was a time when that would not have been enough. The Catholic theme would have cancelled out the expert execution, although to give the critics their due, expert execution of Catholic themes has been a rarity not often met with. It is being met with more and more frequently today and, what is more surprising, it is being well received.

Like the election of Truman, that is a very unexpected sign of our times. It seems that beneath all the shouting for civil rights (some of it sincere) there is the beginning of a genuine liberalism in America. People are beginning to feel that their liberality should extend even to those with whom they don't entirely agree; and they are beginning to suspect that old prejudices may have to give way to new truths. The truths, of course, are actually much older than the prejudices but the news of their truth spreads slowly until some kind of social upheaval begins to break up the air-tight compartments in which people find it comfortable to live.

Other interpretations could be put on the recent political developments, but we continue to think that even Al Smith would have a better chance today. And certainly a Catholic author has a better chance. Thomas Merton's *Steven Storey Mountain* is the most recent indication of the trend.

From a strictly literary point of view, of course, this book doesn't belong with Waugh or Greene, although in point of time it nestles up to them. Merton just doesn't write that well. In justice to him, it must be admitted that there is no real basis for comparison since his autobiography obviously does not attempt to compete with their novels; but the fact remains that the book he has written gives ample evidence that he could not write a novel of Waugh-Greene calibre, if he tried. (If he ever does, it will of course, be a pleasure to be proved wrong). Where his chronological connection with Messrs. Waugh and Greene does become appropriate, however, is in his poetry. He is probably as good a poet as they are novelists. That is a brave statement which could not possibly be proved untrue, and so it is somewhat laughable, we know; but it does express the

second point which we have had in mind since the beginning of this piece, namely, that what is happening in the English-speaking literary world is not simply a question of better reception for Catholic efforts. The delivery is getting better too.

His Mixed-Up Background

Merton's book has an unusual appeal because of the unlikely background of the author. He is a Trappist monk writing in the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, which is just enough like writing in one of the craters of the moon to entice people into reading him. The fact that he is a poet published by New Directions Press doesn't hurt him among non-Catholic audiences either, although that fact could hardly have been well-known until this volume came out.

(When this writer tried to get some of Merton's poetry at the local library, the very non-Catholic-looking lady who served him did a right-about-face when he mentioned the name of the publisher. It was almost as if he had given her the Masonic high-sign or had told her that he was doing a piece for *The Nation.)*

Another point in favor of this book is the fact that Merton is very much a creature of his times with a confused life which calls out to other confused lives. The culmination of all this confusion in a Trappist monastery may only prove how thoroughly a creature of his times he is. At any rate, there are definitely elements in the author and the book which point it at an audience outside the Church; and, as a matter of fact, it is fairly evident that he had no other purpose in writing it than to help others to the truth which he has embraced. For that reason, we think that probably the best critic of the book would be a non-Catholic. Even most of us Catholics, of course, are non-Catholic enough to be able to get much benefit from it, but we are also Catholic enough to find some of it too familiar.

The chief frustration which the book caused this reader, however, came from his failure to find out who Thomas Merton really is.

There is a photograph on the back of the book-jacket which shows several Trappists pitching hay. The figures are very small, their clothes are dark and indistinguishable, and their floppy hats entirely conceal their faces. The caption runs: Trappists at work in the fields. (*Author at left*).

Now, that's not supposed to be amusing, but it very nearly is. It is too much like the case of the character who sends you a post-card picture of his vacation hotel with one of the two thousand windows marked with an "X." The caption might just as well have read: *Author on right:* or, *Author not in picture.* The result in any case is as informative as a print that didn't come out. And yet this photo-

graph is extremely fitting. After 423 pages of considerable detail and something that might pass for intimacy, Thomas Merton never gets to be much more than a shadowy figure with his face concealed.

The Poet Remains Obscure

One reason for this is the author's deliberate and praiseworthy effort to avoid, in the recountal of his experiences, anything so vividly specific as to constitute a danger to the reader. But the difficulty goes deeper than that. It seems that Merton has so far removed himself from the world and from personal ambition that, despite all the talk about what he did and what happened to him and where he went and what he thought, we never get a good look at *him.* A biographer might have treated him more sympatheically; certainly he would have treated him more revealingly.

The book, it seems to us, is like a large and very complete relative clause with its antecedent on a previous page which has been carefully torn out. We are told a great many things (in a rather general sort of way) which he did and which a great many other people have also done, but we never learn very much about how his personality entered into the doing of them or even how he reacted to them, except, again, in a very general sort of way. It is not that it is all buried in the Abbey of Gethsemani; it is rather buried in the soul of Thomas Merton, or torn out of the soul of Thomas Merton and buried in God.

The one exception to this is his treatment of his brother, John Paul. Somehow, even the unusual and consistent use of the two names marks a tenderness that appears nowhere else in the book. In the early pages the author gives us a picture of John Paul which will register strongly with any man who has a brother; and on the last page stands the poem written for the same John Paul now buried at sea in an American uniform. In both these places the author gets on paper something of the strength and beauty of one of the strongest and most beautiful relationships in human life, the love of brother for brother.

Elsewhere in the book he stands aloof from human contacts, or perhaps it is only that, looking back from his proximity to God, almost none of his human contacts seems important enough to record, except in the most matter-of-fact way and only in so far as they have had some bearing on his arrival at this ultimate relationship. Whatever the reason, the result is a lack of some personal quality which makes the trouble Merton had with his teeth one of the stronger memories of him that the reader carries away after hudreds of pages which take him from France to Long Island and back to France again, to England and Cambridge, to New York and Columbia University, to Corpus Christi Church and to

St. Bonaventure's, and finally to Gethsamani and a hunger for solitude with God which even the Trappist life cannot completely satisfy.

While such anonymity is just what the author wants, it is somewhat disappointing, from the reader's point of view, that such an incongruous recollection should mark his mental picture of a man who can write the poetry which Thomas Merton has produced.

Merton's Verse

Unlike the case of most converts, there will be no pre-conversion body of verse in Merton's final collection. Practically all of his poetry seems to have been done after his entrance into the Church, most of it in Gethsemani. We were not able to get the first volume of his poems but the most recent volume, *Figures For An Apocalypse* is probably representative of his whole poetic work. And it is immediately clear to a reader that it *is* poetic work.

The title poem is the best of the lot, in our judgment. Perhaps that seems to be so because it is the longest; for, if we must say something unfavorable about the poems, there is a certain sameness in them that would make one feel that, having read the first, the longest and the most striking of them, he has read them all. That's not quite true, of course, but the style of all the poems is indentical and the themes are limited by his wonderful but exclusive obsession with God and the soul.

A reading of his autobiography does not at all prepare one for Merton's poems. Evelyn Waugh in a jacket blurb damns the book's style with faint praise, it seems to us, when he says: "Mr. Merton writes in an easy colloquial manner which should prove popular to countless readers."

That's not saying much for a book if you are considering it as literature; but we think it is an accurate estimate of Merton's prose style, as exemplified in *Seven Storey Mountain.*

His poetic style, however, is another matter. There is a quality in the figures and in the vocabulary which is redolent of the Scriptures. Some time before the author entered the monastery and even before he had any expectations of becoming a priest he took the unusual step of buying a set of breviaries and beginning the daily recitation of the office. The effect of that long familiarity with the Psalms and his subsequent reading of the whole Old Testament is doubtless evidencing itself now in his poems; and since his subject matter is so elevated the influence of the Scriptures on his style is entirely fitting. There is a richness and a dignity and a power in many of his lines that make them sound almost like scriptural quotations.

"Nickels In Her Veins . . ."

His use of simile and metaphor is his most striking poetic

talent. There figures are fresh and effective, sometimes strikingly bold. His greatest originality is here, even though the scriptural influence also seems strongest here. One example may serve to illustrate our point; it is the epitaph written over the imagined ruins of New York. It may not be the best example that could be chosen but it will serve the purpose.

This was a city
That dressed herself in paper money.
She lived four hundred years
With nickels running in her veins.
She loved the water of the seven purple seas,
And burned on her own green harbor
Higher and whiter than ever any Tyre.
She was as callous as a taxi;
Her high-heeled eyes were sometimes blue as gin,
And she nailed them, all the days of her life,
Through the hearts of her six million poor.
Now she has died in the terrors of a sudden contemplation
—Drowned in the waters of her own, her poisoned well.

Again and again we come across such lines as, "The waters shine like tin in the alarming light," or "The steel is cleaner than ice/the blade is sharper than thought:/ The curve is like an intellect, neat." or "The moon is paler than an actress." All of these are from the first long poem in this latest volume, but they are illustrative of the style of the whole book.

As is evident from the quotation above, Merton is a modern in his poetic approach. He never uses rhyme, except accidentally, because he finds he can handle his thought better without rhyme. He refuses to be bound by any rule except the necessity of expressing himself in the most forcible and effective way.

The Question: God's Will

Thomas Merton is now, we estimate, about thirty-five years old, with the probability of many years before him. There is no telling what he may produce in those years. His own desires would make them years of silence, productive only of a greater and greater knowledge and love of God. If his superiors do not change their attitude, however, he will continue to put to use his unquestionable poetic talent. Despising fame, looking for words of commendation from no one except Christ, his Master, this unusual man may yet become an indelible figure in our literary history. It is early to say. It is only clear now that Thomas Merton does not want that. But God may. And if He does, the Trappist monk will heroically continue to bear the cross of worldly favor until God releases him; for God's will has become for him earth's only good. Whatever else his autobiography may or may not reveal, it certainly makes that one all-important fact completely clear.

The Innocent Abroad

Claiborne Lafferty

Saying Mass in Paris

THE fact that I spent most of the time from the middle of June to the middle of October in Paris does not justify my friends in Rome spreading the malicious rumor which resulted in my being greeted by priests fresh from their presence with the expression "Of yes, you are the one who lives in Paris." However my stay in the city did qualify me as a sort of unofficial guide to visiting Bishops, priests, Boston pilgrims and what have you.

I became an expert on the process of saying Mass in the capital. The first obstacle to be met is the sacristan. The primary requirement for every French sacristan is an overwhelming aversion to the English language. Even the best of them, Monsieur le Sacristain de la Madeleine, with dozens of Americans going through his domain each month, has remained impervious to the delights of our so beautiful mother tongue. What is more, these gentlemen do not appear much interested in their own language. I have spent hours the night before, practicing simple requests to spring the next morning. I could ask to my complete satisfaction for an alb a little less long and would be brought a black vestment for a Sunday Mass. My elegant Parisian-accented appeal for a host did not fail completely to convey the idea as I ended up with a monstrance instead of a chalice.

Notre Dame, the Madeleine, St. Roch's, and Sacre Coeur are all that the visitor could wish. They are used to strange priests coming in and handle them with expedition and finesse. True, one American complained to me that he had been practically insulted at the Madeleine because he was told he had to wait a half hour since all the altars were full. The sacristan, however, had done his best to explain volubly and with scads of gestures that while there were seven altars only five of them were being used because there were no altar stones on the others. It is strange that in a church of that size and popularity all altars are not fully equipped. But this is not the sacristan's responsibility and he cannot be expected to go out chiselling a new altar stone and making martyrs for relics.

The sacristan at the Madeleine and the one at St. Roch's became my firm friends. I divided my time about equally between the two; the first in the early summer and the latter when I moved to a cooler spot during the warm weather and the spot happened to be just around the corner from St. Roch's. While the two of them were away on simul-

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This article comes to us from North American College.

taneous vacations during the fashionable month of August I felt quite lonely in the big city. They became so used to having me around that I was assigned to scheduled Masses whenever M. le Vicaire was *en vacance.* (Any Frenchman can understand that word no matter how badly pronounced.)

Far be it from me to criticize the churchly customs of our gallant allies but one or two did strike me as a slight deviation from the strict rules of liturgy. Altar boys are practically nonexistent. When there is one he is so busy answering the Kyrie at the opposite altar he completely forgets to bring out the wine and water. He always manages to appear somehow at the sacristy exit as M. l'Abbe Americain leaves.

A Great Many Candles—Unlit

The French go in for a great many candles. They are stretched in rows three and four deep. But no matter how many there may be only one is ever lighted. It gives a funny sensation at first, makes one feel a little blear-eyed. If the chapel is very dark, which most of them are, the sacristan will furnish an additional candle on a short stick and place it beside the book so that the celebrant will not be required to recite from memory. That is sure to produce a good tip for if one is treated like a Bishop, one must act like a Bishop—or as a Bishop should.

Soap is still undoubtedly hard to get in a war-ravaged country but the linens I met in a few places could not possibly have gotten that dirty in one single war, while Notre Dame and the rest of the familiar ones have spotless altar cloths, some see to it that no visiting priest ever returns if he can help it. Just like back home.

Wine and water cruets are left on the altar but the Missal is sedulously carried to the sacristy, and brought back immediately. There is a purpose in that, I am sure; but since my Berlitz French had not reached the subjunctive of purpose I could not inquire what it was. They are nice red-bound books but hardly the size, although they are the color, Monsignori might want to carry off as souvenirs.

Sometimes I doubted if it was a wise move for me to venture out to other churches. I should have stayed in those with whose corporals I was familiar. I had learned to recognize each one and could open it automatically at the least dirty fold.

In strange churches I rapidly turned from an object of curiosity into a thing of suspicion. I would arrive in black suit and clerical collar. The sacristans had heard of weird outfits worn by missionaries in heathen lands and were willing to face up to one out of zeal for the spread of the faith. When I would open my brief-case, put on my sleeveless cassock and produce my own amice and purificator they be-

gan to have doubts. Did I wish to say Mass in a different rite? When I delved back again into the mysterious depths of my seemingly magic satchel they would jump back expecting nothing less than a charmed serpent. My somewhat shamed faced production of a harmless breviary was an anticlimax and an insult. At this point I was coldly asked to produce my celebret. I had them there for my Chancellor is a progressive chap and has our celebrets printed on a new fangled card of a size which fits into an ordinary wallet. It is so easy to carry around other cards of exactly the same size, such as gasoline courtesy cards, a baseball pass and last year's driver's license. I would invariably produce each of the above in the order named and when I finally reached the celebret he would have nothing to do with a thing of those dimensions. By that time I was beginning to wonder if I had wandered away from my diocese all unwittingly violating Canon 804. It worked out fine in the end for the sacristan was so suspicious he would follow me to the altar and stay through the last gospel. In that way I had a server.

My peregrinations were many and my experiences varied but I was yet to reach the zenith. In the chapel where the Blessed Virgin appeared to St. Catherine Laboure a visiting priest in passage may say the special Mass of Our Lady for the 24th of November, and use white vestments. I was calmly getting vested when my companion uncouthly hinted that by early September I could hardly be called "en passage." I would quite willingly have said Mass in honor of St. Gorgonius, Martyr, in red vestments but it was embarrassing to disrobe in public. Sister Sacristan in coming to my rescue displayed a knowledge of moral theology much beyond her years. She pointed out that while I might not personally be a bird of passage or a fly-by-night, there were undoubtedly pilgrims from foreign parts in the chapel who wished to attend Mass said in white vestments and since they had endured the fatigue of travel in order to do this I could properly go out as already clothed. I was so proud of myself for comprehending Sister's fluent French that I disregarded the fact that the red vestments were most likely put away in an obscure corner or that poor Sister Seamstress had them up for repairs while she was equipped with enough red thread. The fact that there were no visitors at all in the church, only two novices intent on their rosary, troubled neither Sister Sacristan nor me. My nosey friend got relegated to a side altar. I have a sneaking suspicion that the little nun came to my rescue because she recognized me as a fellow Parisian. It sometimes pays to spend the summer in Paris.

N. O. D. L. Notes

1948 in review — *Mr. William C. Smith*

THE New Year of 1949 is upon us and, as is the custom with most of us, I'd like to take a backward look and see just what NODL has done, and what strides have been made in 1948 to stem the tide of indecent literature in our country.

One of the big things, of course, has been the movement inaugurated by Mr. Al Dougherty of South Bend, Indiana, to get the druggists' association of his town to refuse to sell objectionable comic magazines in their stores.

Right after the South Bend druggists passed this resolution, the ball started rolling with great vigor and the Indiana Pharmaceutical Association went on record against selling objectionable comics and other literature in their stores, and then in the Fall of 1948, the national Convention of the Retail Druggists' Association, meeting at Atlantic City, passed a similar resolution.

The effect of these meetings and these resolutions is as yet not fully appreciated. I think it stimulated the comic-book publishers of America to wake up finally to the fact that some of the comics sold in this country were anything but good.

So the comic-book publishers came up with a Code of standards of decency for their magazines.

Meanwhile, NODL was taking a prominent part in getting the ball rolling, too, with the result that very active drives are on in over fifty large communities in the country.

The most notable of these drives is taking place in the city of Chicago, under the sponsorship of His Eminence, Cardinal Stritch. The drives are spreading throughout the country, and every week brings news of a new community starting to clean up its newsstands.

But while all these signs are encouraging, one still has to note that objectionable material continues circulating in different channels.

There seems to be a recurrence of letters advertising indecent motion picture films and slides. We even, at our office, get some literature advertising Christmas cards featuring nudes and "appropriate" greetings that "red-blooded men" would want to send to their friends on the Birthday of Christ.

So, even though the flood of indecent comics has been at least partially dammed (I had almost written 'damned') at its source, others who want to make a quick buck are still at their nefarious trade of selling pornography.

On the whole, the magazines of our country have shown some improvement during 1948, but every now and then even the slick paper magazines will sneak

in an article on euthanasia or sex instruction that had better have been filed in the editor's wastebasket.

A Sort of Moral Idiocy

One gathers that even though some cleaning-up has been done, there are vast areas still to be cleaned up, simply because there are a lot of people in this country who don't care what they read or what they sell, or what they publish. The reason, I think, they feel this way, is because they haven't got any sound fundamental moral sense. To them, business is business, reading is reading, and so what? The idea that a soul can be affected by indecency is, I suspect, almost ridiculous to them.

Now all the work of NODL or any other organization or civic drive is almost powerless against this type of mind unless that drive is accompanied by prayer on the part of those who participate in the crusade. One cannot change a man's mind about his moral duty by stopping the sale of a bad magazine. There is, finally, only one thing that can change the minds of such people and that is to pray for them.

For this reason, I respectfully recommend to the readers of this column, that if you would fight indecent literature, your campaign against it be accompanied by a campaign of prayer to the Immaculate Mother of God that she may touch the wandering hearts of those who publish, or sell, or buy bad literature, that they may be illuminated by her virtue of purity.

To this end, I should like to recommend to the readers of this column the crusade of prayer called the Block Rosary, described in the pages of this magazine last month. It simply consists in encouraging lay people in every parish to go out and ring doorbells and invite their neighbors of all races, creeds and colors, to gather in one of the homes of the neighborhood each day to say the Rosary for the conversion of Russia and the peace of the world.

You know, we cannot have peace in the midst of filth and indecency. I am sure the Blessed Mother of God would listen to anyone who asks her own Immaculate Heart to change the hearts of those who poison the hearts and minds of others.

And now, on the threshold of a new year, may I thank all the readers of this column, and may I ask all of you to remember us in your prayers. I, too, shall remember all of you in my prayers and wish you a happy and blessed New Year.

Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore seek not to understand that thou mayest believe, but believe that thou mayest understand.—**St. Augustine.**

Magazines Disapproved

BY THE

National Organization for Decent Literature

January, 1949

FOR THE INFORMATION OF COMMITTEES AND DEALERS, BUT NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CODE FOR CLEAN READING

Periodicals are listed, which

(1) glorify or condone reprehensible characters or reprehensible acts;
(2) contain material offensively "sexy";
(3) feature illicit love:
(4) carry illustrations indecent or suggestive, or
(5) advertise wares for the prurient-minded.

The following magazines are held to offend against one or more provisions of the above code.

MAGAZINES STILL PROCURABLE IN MANY PLACES

All Baseball Stories
Amazing Detective Cases
American Detective Annual
Army Post
Army Romance
Art-lac
Art Models
At Ease!
Authentic Detective Cases

Beauty Parade
Best Songs
Best True Fact Detective
Big Song Magazine
Bits Of Beauty
Booby Trap
Breezy Stories
Brevities
Buddies
Burlesk

Cartoon Humor
Certified Detective Cases
Cheers
Comedy
Complete Detective
Crime Detective
Current Detective
Cutie

Detective Book
Detective Short Stories
Detective World
Digest and Review
Dizzy Parade
Dramatic Detective

Eyeful
Fact Detective
Feature Detective Cases
Flirt
Flophouse News
Front Page Detective
Fun
Fun Frolic
Fun Parade
Fun Riot
Fun Year Book

Gag and Cartoon Book
Gal Parade
Gag Gazette
Gaiety
Gay Book
Gay Broadway
Giggles
G. I. Joe
Good-Time Charlie

Headquarters Detective
Hi Yi
Howl
Humor, Inc.
Humorist

Indigestible Digest

Joker
Judge

Keep 'Em Laughing!
Khaki Weekly

Laff
Laff Annual
La Paree
Latest Popular Songs
Line Up Detective
Lip Parade

Moron Laughs
Movie Glamour
Movie Play
Modern Sun Bathing
Mystery Tales

National Detective Cases
Navy Romance
Newest Detective Magazine
New Girl Parade
Nippy Stories
Night and Day
Nudist and all Nudist Magazines

Pack O'Fun
Peek
Pictorial Chuckles
Pictorial Detective
Picture Show
Pin-Up Pack
Pin-Ups
Pip
Play
Pocketful Of Pepper
Police Detective
Popular Psychology Guide
Power Plus

Real Detective Cases
Real Fact Detective Cases
Real Screen Fun
Saucy Stories
Sec
Secret Detective Cases
Sensational Detective
Sex Facts
Show Girls
Smash Detective Cases
Smash Fact Detective
Smiles
Special Feature Detective
Sports Action
Stocking Parade
Story
Strength and Health
Swank

Tales of Army Love
Ten Story Book
Tidbits of Beauty
Timely Detective
Titter
True Crime Detective
Tru-Life Detective Cases
Varieties Cartoon Cavalcade
Vital Detective Cases

Western Trails
What's Cooking
Wheatley Pumper
Wit and Wisdom
Whisper
Who Is Your Pin-Up Girl?
Wink

Yellow Book
Yoo Hoo
Your Physique
Your Figure Beautiful

Zippy Stories

THE 3 WEEKLY MESSENGERS stimulate classroom interest in the study of current affairs and in supplementary reading. Monthly Study Guides are again supplied. The Confraternity MESSENGERS bring you religious instruction in periodical form for Catholic students not attending Catholic schools. Based on the Baltimore Catechism, they provide a well-planned course of instruction and weekly lessons fully developed for the pupil.

OTHER CLASSROOM AIDS—*8 New Workbooks in Religion* prepared by the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart and the Maryknoll Sisters for the elementary grades; *Our Lady of Fatima* booklet and wall chart—on the apparitions at Fatima; the manuals, *Good Citizens* (for Civics Clubs) and *The Teaching of Current Events*, for better integration of civics with classroom work. Prices on request.

THE MESSENGERS IN ACTION

.P YOU OVERCOME SSD* IN YOUR CLASSROOM

*Second Semester Doldrums, that insidious condition that sometimes infects entire classes with mental lethargy and general inattention, can be cured quickly and easily. A liberal application of THE MESSENGERS in Action will do wonders. Interest is aroused, lethargy and lack of response are thrown off, when you use THE MESSENGERS in Action in *your* classroom during the second semester.

TREASURE CHEST—Thirty-six pages of wholesome fun and adventure in full color. Issued every two weeks, September to May, it's the only bi-weekly Catholic comic magazine with the added attraction of a colorful glossy cover.

24 E. THIRD ST., GEO. A. PFLAUM PUBLISHER INC. DAYTON 2, OHIO

Harvest among Harvesters

John J. Heinz

Retreats for farmers

THERE'S a new kind of retreat spreading across the prairies and into the hill country of America. It is called the Rural Retreat. It lasts only a day and a half; it presents no specific sermons on such subjects as Death, Heaven, Hell, Sin; and it reverses the usual approach by reasoning not from God to man, but from a specific man—the farmer—to God.

It is exceedingly successful, and it promises great things for the future of the Church and the nation. Aiming at refertilization not only of the farmer's soul, but of his farm as well, it may well prove to be the beginning of the end of the land-wastage which has given the birth-controllers an excuse for their attempt to revive old discredited Malthusianism as one more stick with which to beat tomorrow's children.

The Rural Retreat, to put it in a nutshell, strives to reunite the farmer with God, not only spiritually, but materially. It restores the old partnership between the man with the hoe and the Creator who placed him on the land to bring forth good fruit both earthly and heavenly. A Rural Retreat is not simply a general retreat for rural people. It is a special retreat which digs its hands into the soil to remind the farmer that he is God's steward, entrusted with the great task of feeding God's children.

A rural retreat in this special sense calls for a special kind of retreat-master. Not every priest can do it. What is needed is a priest who is somehow close to the land, either because he was brought up on a farm, or because he has lived among farmers, perhaps as a rural pastor. The task is that of reconnecting the eternal truths with the everyday life of the tiller of the soil. For that special knowledge and sympathies are needed.

The Rural Retreats, sponsored by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, do not reason from eternal truths to their application here and now. Instead, they start with the daily life of the farmer and move from there to the purpose of life and the will of God. The farmer is a man who deals with *things;* therefore the approach is not negative, but positive; not abstract, but concrete.

Keeping the Family Together

One of the most valuable lessons we have learned is that the best Rural Retreat is a Rural Family Retreat. On the farm, the family lives together, works

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Msgr. Heinz is First Vice-President of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

together, has fun together. Family ties are close and strong. The Family Rural Retreat brings father, mother and adolescent children to church together as they go almost everywhere else together; and afterward they check and balance one another, keeping alive and fresh the things they have learned.

We have learned also, anew, the wisdom of the Church in developing the parish. The Family-Parish Rural Retreat, we have discovered, is the ideal. It is possible to extend the retreat to an entire district, but when we do so, we lose something. Parishioners know and understand one another; they have mutual interests; with them, the retreat can be more down-to-earth, homier, more to-the-point.

As in all other parish affairs, the Rural Retreat depends for its success first on the pastor. If he promotes it well in advance, and selects a time when farmers are not specially busy, he will have a large attendance. Even in parishes where retreats are unheard-of, the Rural Retreat has been strikingly successful where the pastor did a good job of selling it to his people.

The product of the successful Rural Retreat is the Christian Farmer, the Christian farm family, the Christian farm parish. We begin with 9 o'clock high Mass. The topic of the first conference, at 9:30, is "The Dignity of the Vocation of the Farmer." That is an inexhaustible subject, fit for the eloquence of the most gifted speaker. It is a surprising subject, too; rare is the farmer who realizes his high vocation, his great responsibility, his proper standing in the community and in the eyes of God. He goes away from this conference with a new and inspiring vision of himself.

Afterwards, there is spiritual reading. Then, at 10:40, a speaker, perhaps of the calibre of Bishop A. J. Muench of Fargo, N. D., addresses himself to the subject, "Partnership With God." Little imagination is necessary to see how this can be developed; how the farmer can be brought to a realization that when he places the seed in the ground and tills and harvests the plant, he is co-operating with the Creator in the mysterious business of fostering life, of making the earth bloom like a garden.

No Time Wasted

At 11:15, the topic is "Christ and the Farmer." The reunion here is easy to bring about. Christ loved the fields and the mountains; in utterance after utterance He took His examples from growing things. "Behold the lilies of the field . . . the sower went out to sow . . . the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed . . ." The farmer recognizes in Christ a kindred soul in a very special sense; He understands, more keenly than the city dweller, many of His allusions. He and Christ are easily brought together.

At noon, of course, there is lunch; the hearty, healthy, tasty lunch of the rural areas, salted with laughter and conversation, rich with the vigor of those who live in the open air under the bright skies. Here the farm families have the opportunity to do something unusual for them—to get acquainted with visiting priests or prelates, to break bread with their spiritual guides.

But there is not much time; a day and a half passes quickly. Promptly at 1 o'clock, there is a conference on "The Farmer's Duties, Material and Spiritual." His duties to the family as a whole; his duties to his wife; his duties to his children. He listens intently as new vistas of the good he can accomplish open before him. He sees himself suddenly in a patriarchal light, as the head of the family in the Christian sense of being the protector and servant of all. It is a new light on life for him.

After another spiritual reading, we hasten along to an address, perhaps by Father F. X. Mueller of Knox, N. D., on "Mother and Father Teach Religion." Here there is revived in the parents' minds a richer sense of their guardianship over souls destined for eternity with God. They see how they must plant and water and till spiritual seeds as they do material seeds. They preceive that there is fruit to be brought forth for eternity. They are reminded that the mind too has its soil, with immense possibilities for growth.

At 2:25, the subject is "Stewardship of the Land." Here we touch on Soil Conservation, that problem which lies at the roots of the security, prosperity and progress of the nation. We speak of the farmer's obligation to keep his homestead presentable; to clean and paint and beautify. We discuss, too, material comforts in the home—the things that make for gracious and civilized living, which minister to the soul through the body, which lead on to higher things.

Social Charity

Quickly, we move along to the fifth conference—Social Charity: The obligations of the farmer to his fellowmen, to his community, to his parish. We knit together the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God. It is a process of restoration, of reconstruction; it is a healthy antidote to the nihilism and anarchy spreading through the world.

At 4, we have Benediction, with confession during and afterward. The second day begins with Mass at 8, at which the families come together to the Communion railing. At 8:45 there is Communion Breakfast, and from then until 11, a round-table discussion and recapitulation of what we have studied, plus talks about religion, education, recreation in the home. At 11, a Rural Holy Hour, then back to the farm with a new vision of the home, the stables, the fields.

There is no question of con-

flict here with established closed-retreat-houses. Few farmers have the time for a three or four-day closed retreat; and those who can manage it will be stimulated toward it by the Rural Retreat, which reaches many who otherwise would never make one. Our average attendance has been a remarkable 60 per cent of the adults in the parish. Afterwards, it is common to hear people asking, "When can we have another? Why have we never had this before?"

Rural Retreats have been conducted in the dioceses of Wichita, Helena, Davenport, Peoria, Winona, Fargo, Bismarck, Green Bay, Dubuque, Kansas City. They are hitting right at the roots of some of our gravest national problems—depopulation of the country areas, devastation of land values, the unhealthy rush to the cities, and the materialistic concept of life.

It would be too much to say, "Save the farmer and you save all." But few will dispute the statement, "Save the farmer and your foundation is secure." Give us Christian farmers, and we can breathe much easier.

Two Marks of Christianity

"There is nothing," averred Dr. Samuel Johnson, "which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern . . ." Last week he found agreement in an interesting quarter.

"I have always regarded a good inn-keeper as a real benefactor to the community," wrote the Rev. E. A. Newman, vicar of Hythe in Kent, in his parish paper, "and a well-run inn . . . as a useful and necessary amenity. I suppose it is true to say that all through our history the two chief meeting places of the community have been the church and the inn. Indeed there should not be antagonism between them, and it is foolish narrowmindedness that makes people think a pub to be a wicked place. Its purpose is to encourage fellowship and happiness, surely two marks of the Christianity that the church aims to produce."—**Time.**

Strictly American

The most important discovery that awaits modern times is that of the Divine Office, the greatest love-song of the Church. When will the Holy Spirit raise up a John the Baptist for it?

Or is all America like the two Sisters with whom we had breakfast by chance in a restaurant not long ago.

"Which Office do you say?" we asked them. "We don't say any," was the beaming reply. "I guess it is because we are a strictly American Order!"—**The Living Parish.**

Code and Cult

P. J. Lydon, S.T.D.

St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, California

CAN we say an Our Father for the dead from the pulpit? Is this not adding to the Mass?

No. You are not changing the prayers in the Missal.

If you distribute Communion before the Celebrant communicates, is it grave?

Yes, unless there is a grave cause, such as giving Viaticum (see Ritual IV, 2, n. 11; S. C. Rites, May 11, 1878; O'Connell, Vol. II, P. 152).

I am a chaplain in a state prison. I do not think that I should keep my salary.

You may, unless the Bishop rules otherwise. You are doing Church work. Chaplains in the Army and Navy may keep their salaries. If you wish to give it to the parish, it is praiseworthy.

May a vegetable soup with beef-stock be used on Friday?

No, since beef-stock is a meat extract—from beef.

Does Jello break the abstinence?

No, accoding to good authorities.

If a quart of milk is dehydrated and the result is 8 ounces of powder, may a person take a corresponding amount of milk for supper.

No, according to good authors.

A quart, however, would not produce 8 ounces.

Where can I get a copy of the Index of Forbidden Books?

See Index of Pius XII, 1948: Libreria editrice Vaticana, Citta del Vaticano, Italy.

Those who have secured or wish to get copies of my *Ready Answers in Canon Law* (Benzigers, 1948 edition) should make the following changes in their copies. Mistakes happen. New decisions of Rome are included. I shall be glad to get suggestions for another printing. See Index.

p. 8: under *Absolutio Complicis,* say: Benedict *XIV.*

p. 40: (note) See new faculties given to the Apostolic Delegate (*The Jurist,* 1947, p. 339).

p. 383: This exception in favor of "those born of non-Catholics" was *abrogated* by Pius XII on August 1, 1948. It is effective January 1, 1949. From May 19, 1918 to Jan. 1, 1949 these marriages are judged by the law of the Code. After Jan. 1, 1949 *all those baptized in the Catholic Church* will be bound by the Catholic Form of Marriage (A. A. S., 1948, 305, 306). This is the law, whether the persons grew up in the faith or not. Make this change also in *Marriage Legislation* (Benzigers), p. 267, ff.

p. 384: under *Particular Dele-*

gation, last sentence, say: *is not valid.*

p. 440: first line on top, say: the *hand* of the Bishop.

p. 440: note: The assistant Bishops are true consecrators. They should recite the words in a low voice (Pius XII, Nov. 30, 1944).

p. 506: Proxy (note): The *mandans* must personally designate the proxy (C. of Int., May 31, 1948).

p. 579: note: The three Midnight Masses at Christmas are not formally different acts. The same system of time must be observed (C. of Int., May 29, 1947).

p. 586: under Unbaptized Persons, line 3, say: *is valid.*

Question—I have found several discrepancies between the sacred texts in the Missal and those same texts in the chant-books, v. g. the *Liber usualis,*— For instance:

Dedication of a Church: Offertory

Liber: voluntatem, Domine Deus.

Missal: voluntatem.

Palm Sunday: Introit.

Liber: unicornuorum.

Missal: unicornium.

Transfiguration: Gradual.

Liber: rege: lingua mea calamus scribae velociter scribentis.

Missal: rege.

Easter: Sequence.

Liber: precedet suos.

Missal: precedet vos.

Quae cum ita sint, as they say, may I ask:

1) Could a choir ever be wrong if it sang the texts exactly as in the Missal?

2) Is the text when sung by the choir sometimes a different version from that authorized to be said by the priest?

3) Can it be that, in their enthusiasm to revive old melodies, the champions of Gregorian Chant, the very people who forbid the liturgical use of the great musical masterpieces because of liberties taken with the words, are themselves guilty of the same thing?

Answer.— We referred this problem to Dr. John C. Selner, S.S., scholarly president of the St. Gregory Society. In reply he quotes a Roman decree one paragraph of which considers this matter and goes on to answer all the questions put to us by our correspondent. Here it is:

. . . Qua vero forma cantus aptius posset restitui, restitutae sunt etiam nonnullae hic illic quoad verba lectiones, quamvis ab hodierno textu Missalis alienae. Quarum restitutio, quam ab ipso Summo Pontifice, in audientia die xiv Martii anni 1906 Emo Cardinali Pro-praefecto hujus Sacrae Congregationis indulta, expresse fuerit approbata atque praescripta, in futuris Gradualis Editionibus omnino erit observanda . . .

Contrariis non obstantibus quibuscumque. Die vii Augusti 1907.

Seraphinus Card. Cretoni, SRC Praefectus.

How did the differences arise in the first place? One might conjecture that in the days when much of the chant was written, people were slow to switch from the Itala to the Vulgate; besides, a change in texts would have involved too much tinkering with the tunes, so it was finally ordered left as is.

Something of exactly the same sort might well happen when and if the new version of the Psalter becomes universally prescribed. All the antiphons could hardly be changed to accomodate the revision, so they'll likely be let stand, the revision being used only with the psalms themselves.

Actually, there are not many differences between the Missal and the Liber. In any case, according to the decree just quoted, the Liber is official and prescribed; nor could one say that the Missal should be preferred in singing. We are to sing the texts just as they stand in the Liber.

Regarding our correspondent's last question: from what has been said it is apparent that the sponsors of music reform have taken no liberties with the texts of either proper or ordinary. The Viennese Masses, referred to in the question, and practically all of them proscribed under the terms of *Motu proprio,* were banned as being too long and too florid; as subordinating the text to the musical idea to such an extreme as often to make a complete hodgepodge of the sacred words.

Behind with the News

A traveler one night had to stop over in a small town owing to a landslide on the railroad, caused by a heavy rain which continued to fall in torrents.

"This certainly looks like the flood," he remarked to a passing waitress.

"The what?"

"The flood. Surely you've read about the flood and the ark landing on Mt. Arat . . ."

"Mister," she replied, "I haven't seen a paper for three days."

Youth is not formed for pleasure, but for heroism. The word is not too strong. A young man must be a hero today to to resist the temptations that surround him, to be the lonely believer in a despised doctrine, to face the arguments, the blasphemy, the scurrility which fill our books, our newspapers, and our streets, without giving way a finger's breadth—to resist his family and his friends, to be one against many, to be faithful against all.—Paul Claudel, **Letters to a Doubter.**

Lon Francis

Smith vs. Dallman
or
The Bible versus Luther

DALLMAN:

CHRIST says: "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you say, 'We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do'" (Luke 17:7-10).

The Pope teaches that man can do more than God demands and accumulate a surplus of good works, which can be sold to those short of good works. Such special good works are—(1) voluntary poverty; (2) remaining unmarried; (3) perfect obedience to a spiritual superior. Remember Tetzel and his sale of indulgences!

SMITH:

Surely Dallman would not hold that man is unable to do more than God demands. Did not Christ recommend to the young man, who declared that he had kept the Commandments from his youth, that he could do more, and actually recommended that he do more, namely, that he go sell all that he had and give it to the poor and then come follow him (Matt. 19:21)?

But the Church does not teach that the "surplus" good works of the more perfect can be sold. Since Dallman probably has in mind "indulgences," and refers to them in the last sentence above, we shall touch upon them later.

But what is wrong with "voluntary poverty"? Did not Christ Himself "volunteer" to leave the glory and the riches of Heaven, which He had enjoyed for all eternity, and "empty Himself" even of His infinite majesty, to become the poorest of the poor among men here on earth? Did He not "voluntarily" choose to be born in a stable, to deprive Himself "voluntarily" of everything which the worldly-minded seek? Did He not "voluntarily" become "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil, 2:8)? Did not all the Apostles "leave all things" to follow Him? And when Peter asked what the reward would be for doing more than man is compelled to do by the Commandments, Jesus answered: "Everyone who leaves home or brothers or sisters or mother or wife or children or fields for My Name's sake will receive a hundredfold and possess everlasting life" (Matt. 19:29).

What is wrong with remaining unmarried in order to have Christ only as one's Beloved? Did not St. Paul recommend it (1 Cor. 7:32-33): "He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God, whereas He who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is

divided." Does not St. John (Rev. 14:4-5) say: "These follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes. These were purchased from among men, the first fruits unto God and unto the Lamb; and in their mouth there was found no lie; they are without spot before the throne of God."

Did not St. Paul Himself remain unmarried? Were any of the Apostles married with the exception of Peter, and did he not separate from his wife in order to follow Christ?

What is wrong with perfect obedience? Christ rendered perfect obedience not merely to a superior, but to His equal—God the Father.

Did not John and Andrew, the first Apostles, practice perfect obedience when they left their nets and blindly followed Jesus at His mere request "follow Me" (Mark 1:16)?

Religious Orders and communities of men and women are as old as the Church and in them not "two or three are gathered together in Christ's name," but hundreds of them. Hence in keeping with His promise Christ must "be in their midst" (Matt. 18:20).

The first of all religious communities was that started by Christ Himself when He invited twelve men to "leave all things and follow Me." In fact the first Christians lived a sort of community life, relinquishing their property or selling it and contributing the money to a common fund. St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles (2:42) writes: "And they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayer . . . And all they that believed were together, and they had all things in common. They sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all according as every one had need. And daily persevering with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread in the houses, they took their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people." He also wrote (Acts 4:33): "The multitude of believers had one heart and one soul; neither did any one say that aught of the things he possessed was his own, but all things were common to them."

In the Breviary we are told that after the Resurrection of Christ, Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, who had been so loyal to Christ, were placed in a boat bereft of sails or oars and thrust out into the Mediterranean to be shipwrecked; but that their boat was carried by the winds safely to the shores of southern France, near what is now the city of Marseilles. It is also recorded that Mary betook herself to a cave, where she continued to follow the contemplative life, while Martha organized women into a religious community to promote works of charity.

The Sisters consecrate themselves soul and body to Christ,

and vow for life, poverty, chastity and obedience, to conform to the will of God in all things. This is the acme not only of perfection but of perfect happiness. No one is unhappy who wills what God wills, and that is why Christ, amid all His sufferings, possessed perfect interior peace: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt"; "My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me."

Now about the sale of Indulgences, probably the meanest thing which Luther and his followers in the early sixteenth century did was to charge the Church with selling "pardons for sins." In the first place an Indulgence does not pardon sin; it is not, as represented by the sects, a "license to sin"; it presupposes the forgiveness of sin by repentance, confession and absolution, and then merely removes some of the temporal punishment due to sin.

It is true that to Tetzel, head of the Dominican Order, was committed the task of publicizing that Indulgence as an inducement to people to make a contribution to the building of the great Basilica of St. Peter's, Rome. But Luther knew that the Indulgences would not be granted to any one, no matter how large the contribution, who did not first receive the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, and offer prayers for the intentions of the Pope, who was undertaking the task of erecting that glorious Cathedral, in whose building every Catholic certainly should have wished to have a part.

Now that was in the day when there were no daily newspapers, no radio, no telephone nor telegraph, nor any other manner of communicating with the people than from the pulpit. It was in a day when there was a great deal of religious indifference, and a considerable laxity of morals, which would dispose people belonging to those two classes to charge the Church with "selling" Indulgences. It is conceivable that some of Tetzel's assistants in the promulgation of the Indulgence laid more emphasis on the alms than on the spiritual conditions requisite for the gaining of the Indulgence. But the Church herself is not responsible for that.

Dallman's church and every other church, when seeking alms for the missions or for world relief or other causes, promise spiritual blessings, in return, and that was the precise thing intended by Pope Leo X of that day.

As Father Conway, C.S.P., remarks: "A man does not purchase his wife if, at marriage, he signs over to her a portion of his property. A Protestant does not purchase a wife for ten dollars, because he gives a fee of that amount to the minister who performs the ceremony."

Cardinal Newman, who certainly studied this question thoroughly before he came into the Church wrote *(The Present Position of Catholics in England,*

113): "It is utterly false to assert that it has ever been held that the perpetration of crime could be 'indulged' for any sum of money."

Historians do refer to "abuses" connected with the preaching of that Indulgence, but most of them who examine the "Bull of Indulgence" agree that there is nothing contained in it that warrants the charge that the Indulgences were to be sold.

Catholic Priests in Action

"All through the worst hours an American Padre went about among the dead and dying giving absolution to his boys. Once he came back to Headquarters, but he would not take a bite of food or stay, though his friends urged him. He went back to the field to minister to those who were glad to see him kneeling over them in their last agony. Four men were killed by shell fire as he knelt beside them, and he was not touched, not touched until his own turn came. A shell burst close by, and the Padre fell dead."

An American General said of a Catholic priest who had been wounded: "Father exemplified in a singular degree the qualities that make a chaplain valuable to our Army. For long months before his unit was committed to action, he studied the art of the infantrymen, that he might be better fitted to serve his men. In him were blended skill, courage and understanding of the splendid possibilities of spiritual work among our troops. During the campaign in Tunisia, these qualities did not escape notice; he was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action at that time. I want to inform you that the contribution of this exemplary priest toward victory was great."— **Father Dineen, Rector of Holy Innocents and Chaplain of the 69th Regiment, N. Y.**

"Strength Became Weak"

He lies in the manger, but contains the world; He sucks at the breasts, but feeds the Angels; He is wrapped in swaddling clothes, but vests us with immortality; He is suckled, but adored; He found no place in the inn, but makes for Himself a temple in the hearts of believers. For in order that weakness might become strong, strength became weak.—St. Augustine.

To the Ends of the Earth

Context (the British Catholic Digest), we read in a recent ad, goes round the world each month: copies are regularly on sale in such far distant places as Kuala Lumpur, Malaya; Wanganui, New Zealand; Wellawatte, Ceylon; and San Diego, California—"as well as in Metropolitan centers."

Sermon Suggestions

For the month of January ✢*J. F. Noll, D.D.*

The Supernatural

January 9

You have been told that the world outside the Catholic Church does not understand the supernatural; and because Catholics live in that world they find it difficult to retain a clear concept of it, even though they partake of supernatural things. But since the Bible calls "the world, the flesh and the devil" the chief dangers of our salvation, let us see how they destroy people's interests in the supernatural, and even their belief in its reality. St. John refers to these three evils as "the concupiscence of the eyes, the concupiscence of the flesh, and the pride of life" (1 John II, 16). Let us, therefore, briefly see how (1) the world; (2) the flesh; and (3) the devil are opposed to the supernatural.

(1) The world in which we live is material, which is the antithesis of "spiritual"; its goods are temporal, while our destiny is eternal; its pleasures are for the body only, while our calling is to a complete happiness of soul. This is why St. James tells us that "friendship with the world is enmity before God" (Jas. IV, 4).

Now most people in the world have no definite knowledge about any other world. Hindus and Mohammedans and other pagans believe in the continuation of life beyond the grave, but lack divine revelation concerning its character. They believe that one of their remote ancestors received some revelation, but do not know that God Himself actually came to earth, not only to reveal hidden religious truths, but to elevate us to a divine plane, and by supernatural assistance to keep each united to God Himself.

One-half of all Americans have a pagan point of view; another fourth, calling themselves Christians, subject revealed truths to their private judgment to pass on their acceptability to themselves. They claim that the individual must make his own contacts with God, independent of a Church or of Sacraments. In fact, they hold that we set aside Christ if we look for help through His Church, the Mass, through Mary and the Saints, or if we seek grace or forgiveness of sin through Sacraments.

The world and the supernatural are at odds and, therefore, we can draw no spiritual help from the world's influence. It is purely secular and material. Yet how many Catholics acutually love the world, its spirit, its axioms, and, therefore, follow it, rather than their Church which, representing Christ, must warn against and rebuke it!

(2) We think of the "flesh" and the "spirit"; of the "carnal" and "spiritual" as opposites. Members of most other churches are taught that by Adam's fall all people inherit a corrupt nature, whose appetites and passions cannot be controlled, that, therefore, their gratification will not be imputed to us if we have a strong faith in

Christ as a "Savior," Who antecedently atoned for all our misdeeds. But the unchurched do not usually hold that. They rather believe that the gratification of a natural instinct cannot be sinful, and some even hold that we can perfect our human nature without any divine assistance.

Both groups are very wrong. Protestants who claim to accept the Bible as their rule of faith will find reference, in practically all of its seventy-two books, to the dominion the soul must exercise over the body, the spiritual over the animal man. Spiritual death is pronounced on those who will live "according to the flesh." St. Paul tells us that if he were not wont to chastise his body even he would become a castaway. By our souls we are "only a little less than the angels"; by our bodies only a little more than animals. Our duty is to become more and more like the angels if we hope in eternity to share their bliss.

(3) Every professed Christian must believe in the devil, and most pagans—even our Indian tribes—have always believed in evil spirits. If they were not created "evil," then they must have fallen from a "good" or lofty plane. According to Christian doctrine the devils were originally "angels," created in a supernatural condition, which, like Adam, they forfeited, and to recover which, unlike Adam, they were not given another chance. Hence they hate God, envy us, who, after their fall, were created for the same destiny as that which was originally theirs.

Holy Scripture reminds us that we must "watch and pray" because the devil, "like a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter V, 8); it also reminds us that the devil is "a deceiver from the beginning" (John 8, 44) that he often puts on the "appearance of an angel of light" (2 Cor. XI, 14) in order the better to deceive us; that he lays "snares" for us by making "evil appear good and good evil."

St. Paul tells us that our chief combat in this world is not against "flesh and blood," by which he means our own evil inclinations and the bad example around us, but against "The spirits of wickedness in high places" (Eph. VI, 12). Hence we are urged "to resist strong in faith" (1 Pet. V, 9). With God's grace we are far more powerful than all the devils in hell combined. The evident lesson is that if we use God's grace, day after day, we shall be able to foil his assaults, under whatever guise they are made. The chief reason why God allows the devil to molest and tempt us is to afford us opportunities of defeating him—and every defeat means a victory, and new merit for Heaven.

Place the letter "d" before "evil," and you have "devil"; remove the letter "o" from the word "good" and you have "God." The devil is the personification of evil; God is the personification of good —the Supreme Good. The devil hates the Church as a work of God and not of man. Isn't that a reason why you should love it, listen to it, use its powerful Sacraments?

In the first book of the Bible we read of Satan's attempt to seduce Eve, in which he was successful. He was even brazen enough to tempt Christ, but was repulsed. Persecution of the Church, whether by Communists or the sects, is instigated by evil powers, yet too often Catholics give encourage-

ment to these enemies of God and man.

You are so vulnerable if you do not correspond with grace, vulnerable through your appetites, your senses, your passions, your vanity, your ill-temper.

Since our everlasting salvation will be impossible if we follow the way of the world, allow our flesh to gain mastery over our spirit, and permit the devil rather than God to rule our lives, let us earnestly resolve to live the supernatural life, the only source of genuine happiness even here. Supernatural living is the only sure way to Heaven.

Institutor of Means of Grace

January 16

Outside the Catholic Church Christ is presented (1) as a Teacher; (2) as a Savior; but not (3) as the Institutor of means of grace. Without the means of grace His office as Teacher and Savior would not meet the requirements of salvation.

(1) Christ came from Heaven to earth in order to be "the Light of the World," a divine Teacher, who could teach with authority, and thus dispel the chaos in which the world, over a period of thousands of years, had become involved. He was to be a Teacher not only during the three years of His public life, but through His Church, with which He promised to remain "all days even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. XXVIII, 20). His work of teaching was not fully completed upon His return to Heaven, and that is why He told His Apostles that He would send them the Holy Spirit to guide the Church, to bring to mind "whatsoever I have told you" and to "keep it in truth" (John XVI, 13).

Because the Church needs a spokesman to make its voice heard, He provided for one in Peter and his successors, declaring that He would "bind in Heaven" whatsoever the teaching body of His Church would "bind on earth" (Matt. XVI, 19).

The Catholic Church has this teaching body, whose authority is respected as much as that of Christ Himself, as He declared it must be—"he who hears you hears Me" (Luke X, 16).

Outside the Catholic Church there is no universal teaching body, no international voice which can declare what is divine teaching. The individual must try to find out for himself what is to be believed and done for salvation by reading the Bible, which the primitive Christians did not have, and which individuals could not possibly have had until the printing press, invented in the fifteenth century, made it available to all. In the meantime all of Europe was united together in one faith by the living teacher in Christ's Church.

(2) Mankind in general was redeemed from the slavery of Satan by the Savior from Heaven "Christ the Son of the living God" (Matt. XVI, 16). But no individual is saved by the mere fact of this redemption, which made salvation possible, but not actual for every individual. The merits of His redemption must be applied to ev-

eryone, not by mere "self-dedication" and "self-appropriation" of the Savior, but in harmony with his whole plan of salvation.

Citizenship in His Kingdom was one requirement. This is effected by the same rebirth through which individuals are made "new creatures," "children of God," and "heirs of Heaven."

This rebirth is not effected merely by accepting Christ as Savior. That teaching is the leading heresy of our age. Acceptance of Christ without also accepting the binding force of the Ten Commandments, which He never abrogated, which, as God, He could not abrogate, is nothing less than blasphemy.

The merits of Christ, our Savior, are applied in an entirely different manner to the individual. They reach him through channels of grace which He Himself instituted, one of which actually does effect a rebirth, an adoption of the individual by God as His child. The others are designed to keep him in the relationship of child, to unite him more closely to God, and to enable him to perform works of supernatural value by which, in addition to faith, people help to earn merit for Heaven.

(3) We have frequently called your attention to the fact that the Sacraments are the chief means of grace, or the channels of supernatural and divine life. Other means are prayer, the Mass, and other forms of private and public devotions, with which we shall deal later.

Just as one might be well instructed in secular knowledge without it being helpful because he never makes use of it, so one might be a finished theologian, might have all the knowledge contained in the Catholic Encyclopedia, and still be a rogue. In other words, knowledge of one's religion is not all-sufficient. By the same token one might accept Christ as his Savior, and still be damned because he refuses to regulate his life by the unchangeable moral law.

If Protestants do not stress the Sacraments as means of grace, it is only because, having no claims to Apostolic succession through the valid reception of Holy Orders, they are not empowered to administer any of the Sacraments except Baptism, in whose efficacy most of them do not really believe. Every early Christian sect that has survived, even as a small remnant, from the fourth and fifth centuries, has retained all the seven Sacraments, because it did not lose the Sacrament by which, for instance, its clergy are enabled to forgive sin, to consecrate at the altar, etc.

The merits of Christ the Savior are not channelled to the soul in any other way than through those divine ordinances to which we give the name of "Sacraments."

Only today, for instance, we noticed in the daily paper an account of a Protestant ordination service, which consisted of an ordination address delivered by one minister, and an ordination "charge" delivered by another, assisted by two elders of the congregation. Such an ordination, of course, imparts no powers.

If we are repeating ourselves on the need of the Sacraments, on the need of the Church for the salvation of every individual, it is because most of your Protestant friends have been instructed to believe that the Church is not ne-

cessary, the priesthood is not necessary, Sacraments are not necessary, because salvation is reached by individual contact with Christ through faith alone, that, howsoever guilty of sin one may be by trampling the Commandments of God under foot, he is saved through the overshadowing of his soul by the righteousness of Christ —and hence his sins are not imputed to him. This is a rather easy, but a most unsafe way of salvation.

The Church's Sacramental System

January 23

The absolute need of definite divine ordinances for the bestowal, the strengthening and even the restoration of grace to a soul which came into being without it, should be apparent. The Church calls these grace-conferring ordinances "Sacraments." They are seven in number, and the Catechism has a common definition for all. It reads: "Sacraments are (1) outward signs; (2) of inward grace; (3) instituted by Christ. Now let us try to comprehend this definition.

(1) The Holy Ghost came on Pentecost under a **visible** and audible **sign.** The tongues of fire not only indicated, but imparted enlightenment to the Apostles and the gifts of tongues.

Grace is something invisible, and we would not know that we were receiving it unless the outward sign or ceremony designed to symbolize and empowered by Christ to impart it were employed. We call the outward ceremony "the matter" of the Sacrament, and the words by which it is administered "the form."

You will recall that Christ, Who could have cured without the use of either words or ceremonies, nearly always used them, even when He wrought His miracles for human bodies. He **touched** the eyes of the blind man (Matt. IX 29); He **touched the leper** (Matt. VIII, 3); He **took hold of the hand** of the daughter of **Jairus** (Matt. IX, 25); by **words** He ordered the paralytic to "arise and walk" (Matt. IX, 6); He **breathed** on the Apostles, when He imparted to them the Holy Spirit (John XX, 21).

In Baptism the Holy Spirit and His grace are imparted for the removal of Original Sin by the application of water, which signifies "cleansing power." When the Apostles administered **Confirmation,** they "imposed **hands** on those already baptised" (Acts. VIII, 17). In the **Holy Eucharist** the **bread and wine** constitute the "matter" of the Sacrament, and the **words** of consecration the form. The matter of the Sacrament of **Penance** is the **Confession** of sins, and the form "the absolution imparted." In **Extreme Unction** the priest anoints the five senses with holy oil (James V, 14-15). In **Holy Orders** there is the **imposition of hands** by the Bishop, **anointing with oil,** and the delivery of the sacred vessels. These are the outward signs of the inward grace when the office of the priesthood is received. Christian **Marriage** is a sign or type of the union between Christ and the Church, (Eph. V, 32).

(2) The visible signs, which are the "matter" of the Sacraments, could not of themselves impart grace, but they are, and can be, together with the forms used, the

channels by which the grace of God is brought to the individual soul. No one will question the fact that God can impart His grace through sacred signs or ordinances as well as He can confer it directly.

There is no question about Christ having instituted Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. Christ ordered Saul to be baptized for that purpose; and Peter told the multitude on Pentecost "repent and be bapized every one of you . . . . for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts II, 38). Evidently if our sins were taken away by Baptism, the supernatural life of grace was imparted to our souls.

The action is immediate once the matter and form of the Sacrament are properly used. "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me" (John VI, 57). "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them" John XX, 23); "If he (the sick person who is anointed) be in sin; they shall be forgiven him" (James V, 15).

Baptism confers sanctifying grace the first time; and penance restores it after it will have been lost by sin. These Sacraments are called "the Sacraments of the dead," because they are imparted to those who are bereft of supernatural life. The other five Sacraments are called "Sacraments of the living" because they may be imparted only to those who are alive supernaturally; their purpose is to increase and strengthen other grace already existent in the soul.

(3) I hardly need to tell you that only God, the Author of grace, could institute Sacraments, by which grace, His own divine life, is imparted to the human soul. When we speak about the grace conveyed by the Sacrament we mean "sanctifying grace," often called "habitual grace," which elevates the soul from the natural to the supernatural condition, and is intended to keep it in that condition. The actual graces imparted by the Sacraments are known as "sacramental graces," designed to strengthen the person against the temptations and dangers which he must continue to face even after he will have been closely united to God through the Sacrament received.

Since the Sacraments are all of divine institution, and were committed by Christ to His Church, they can be received, with the one exception of Baptism, only from a Bishop or priest duly delegated by the Church to administer them. If an exception is made for Baptism it is because it is so absolutely necessary for salvation that its reception is not made dependent on one who might not be available at a time when it is sorely needed, namely, when one is dying.

Non-Catholics have not the faintest grasp of the Sacramental system, yet in God's plan of salvation its need is paramount. The clergymen of their church, having lost Apostolic succession, are not empowered to administer any Sacraments. They may as ordinary lay people administer Baptism because of the reason already mentioned.

Catholics, on the other hand, accept the Sacraments as a matter of course, while they seldom reflect on the inestimable benefits their soul-life derives from them.

No one who has even a mediocre grasp of what the Sacraments accomplish would remain, even for a single hour, outside the state of grace.

Divine grace, called by Holy Scripture "the pearl of great price," is the most precious thing outside Heaven, yet it is available to you in great measure if you will only "come to drink at the Savior's fountains." Your indifference towards the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist will, of course, not be excused by God.

If spiritual things are far above material things then you are not justified—nor should you wish to be in showing so much concern for your body and so little for your soul.

Only God's Church Can Have Them

January 30

In our last instruction we pointed out that the Church must possess "means" of conferring grace or supernatural life on the soul, in order to qualify it for life with God and His angels throughout eternity; that God alone could be the Author of such "means," since He alone can bestow grace, defined as His greatest free supernatural gift. Today let us consider (1) the number of the Sacraments; (2) who may receive them; and (3) why modern Protestantism lacks them.

(1) From the time of the Apostles the Church has recognized seven Sacraments, each responding to a special need of the soul at special times during the Christian's progress through life here to life eternal. There is birth in the natural order; there must be birth in the supernatural order. The new-born child must grow in strength, and so must the new-born soul. The body of the child must be nourished by material food; the soul by spiritual food.

There is no way of restoring life to the body after its death, but because of the importance of it Christ did provide a Sacrament for the restoration of the supernatural life to the soul, in order to give it repeated chances for salvation. Through the Sacraments we receive special graces at the very periods of life when they are most needed—at birth, at entrance into youth, after having lost God's friendship, when we embrace a new state of life, and when we are in danger of death.

The oldest Christian sects, which separated from the Mother Church in the fourth and fifth centuries, retained all seven Sacraments, and can legitimately have them because they did not lose apostolic succession. This is true also of Orientals, formed into a separate body by the Constantinople Schism, and who, today, are divided among many national churches and call themselves the "Orthodox Churches."

The grace produced by the Sacraments flows from the infinite merits of Christ, and not from the worthiness of the person who administers them. They are not administered recklessly, and would be invalid if conferred on any one against his will.

(2) It hase been the practice of the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches, constituting t h r e e -

fourths of all Christians in the world, to baptize infants, even though they are unable to apply for it on their own initiative. The Church can resonably presume that if the child understood the purpose and effects of Baptism it would want it. Against this practice Protestants quote the words of Christ: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark XVI, 16). That those words apply to the adult only is clear from the fact that whole families were baptized by St. Paul (Acts XVI, 15; I Cor. I, 16). No adult would be admitted to Baptism in the Catholic Church unless he would willingly and honestly declare that he believed in the full teaching of the Church. Surely every parent would want his babe, an inheritor of Original Sin to be relieved of it and be elevated to supernatural life.

Origen, who lived in the second century, declared that the practice of baptizing infants dates back to Apostolic times; and St. Irenaeus, who also lived in the second century writes: "Christ came to save all, through Him are born again unto God, infants and children, boys and youths and elders."

A Council of the Church held in 416 taught the necessity of infant Baptism, and later Councils reiterated this need. In fact, no other position could be defended by those who understand the first purpose of Baptism, namely, the conferring of supernatural life to the soul destined to a supernatural end.

The need of Baptism is also made clear by the fact that no one can validly receive any other Sacraments unless he will have first been baptized. It is declared by the Church to be the "first and most necessary" Sacrament.

We have already seen that five of the seven Sacraments are not received worthily unless the soul be already in the possession of sanctifying grace.

(3) You may wonder why modern Protestantism lacks the seven Sacraments when Christian churches of much earlier origin hold them. The explanation is clear although you never hear that explanation from Protestant churchmen themselves. The reason is that four of the seven Sacraments, namely, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance and Holy Orders, can be validly administered only by one who himself has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and that can be conferred only by one who can prove his succession from the Apostolic times. It was the Apostles only, whom Christ empowered and authorized to forgive sins, to consecrate the Holy Eucharist; therefore only their successors can exercise that power today. The reformers knew this very well, and therefore, they abolished all the Sacraments except Baptism which any one, in case of necessity, can administer. Since some have what they call "communion service," or the "Lord's Supper," they speak of it as a Sacrament, but from what I have just said it is clear that they cannot have the Holy Eucharist in the Catholic sense.

Lacking the Sacraments Protestants must reduce the condition of salvation to the minimum, and that minimum is a "personal trust in the merits of Christ" without the intermediary of the church, of a priest, or of any Sacrament.

Since most of them do not believe in Original Sin there is no good reason why they should use even the Sacrament of Baptism.

They speak often of the spiritual life, but never of the supernatural life, concerning which they have only the most vague idea; they speak of grace, because Holy Scripture speaks of it, but they have not the Catholic concept of grace, the most precious thing a human being can possess in this life.

Do not merely accept the teaching of the Church concerning the seven Sacraments, but see in them the only means, combined with prayer, for your sanctification. One cannot reach the supernatural end for which he was created unless he lived a supernatural life. Think of grace not only as supernatural, but as divine life in your souls, by which you are most intimately associated even now with the God Who is to be your "reward exceeding great" forever.

No Catholic could be indifferent in the service of God, or indifferent about living in the state of grace, if he devoted only a few minutes each day to reflection on the grandeur of grace, and the intimate personal union with Christ which it furnishes.

Christ's Ministry Continued

February 6

What Christ was in Person during His public life, that the Church has been ever since. He summed up His mission in the few words: "I am the way, the truth and the life." His way the Church makes known to us through the Commandments; His truth through the Creed, and His life she is able to impart to us and to sustain it through the Sacraments. None but Christ's own Church is authorized to teach in His name, and none other is commissioned to exercise His supernatural life-giving ministry.

St. Paul (1 Cor. IV, 1) calls himself a "minister of Christ and a dispenser of the mysteries of God," and so could every duly ordained priest say of himself. His ministry consists chiefly (1) in exercising Christ's priesthood through the Mass, and (2) in dispensing grace through the Sacraments.

(1) Everyone familiar with modern religions knows that they lack these two very essential features of Christ's ministry. We have already told you how it is to be explained. No one can bestow the priesthood on himself. Christ selected the first candidates for His priesthood, prepared them for it for three years, and then ordained and commissioned them Himself. These alone were to select others and, through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, pass down through the centuries the identical ministry committed to them. But since those who, in the sixteenth century, founded new religions, were not empowered to confer the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the men who succeeded them lacked the priesthood and, therefore, their followers were deprived of all Sacraments except Baptism, which, because of its absolute necessity for salvation, does not require a duly ordained clergyman.

From that time the Protestant ministry has consisted chiefly of preaching, and down to this day Protestants call their clergymen "preachers." They are not entitled even to that office, because it too requires a "commission from Christ or His Church," which they never received. We tell you this,

prompted not by prejudice or dislike, but only to declare an easily provable fact, which it is important for you to consider.

To most Protestants even the one Sacrament they may confer, namely, Baptism, is only a symbol, but even the Old Law had many symbols, which St. Paul called "weak and beggarly elements," because they could confer no divine life of themselves. That was true even of circumcision whose merit depended on faith in the future Messias.

(2) The Sacraments, on the other hand, while outward signs, are empowered by Christ, Who instituted them, actually to confer grace or supernatural life on the soul. They are called "mysteries" because of their truly divine effect. Sanctifying grace is imparted to the soul in no other manner than through the Sacraments, because Christ did not institute any other way. Perfect contrition, born of perfect love, can impart grace and forgive sins if one knows nothing about the Sacraments, but he must be disposed to apply for the Sacraments if he should learn of them.

The purpose of the Sacraments is to sanctify the soul or to make it holy, to infuse divine life into it, or to nourish the divine life of which it is already in possession. The divine effect takes place unless the recipient himself places an obstacle in the way. An unwillingness to be baptized would prevent the act of Baptism from producing grace. An unrepented grevious sin would prevent the benefit or the imparting of grace by the Sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Extreme Unction.

Sacraments are "sensible" signs, because they are perceived by the senses. Men could not perceive channels of grace in any other way. And, of course, only God could give to any sensible thing the power of conferring grace. Not even the Apostles could have instituted "means of grace," which the Sacraments are.

Just as the invisible nature of Christ operated through His humanity, so the grace of the Sacraments is channeled through its outward symbol. For instance, in Baptism "water" signifies a "cleansing," but it also actually does cleanse the soul from Original and all other sins, because Christ gave it that power.

So it is with the imposition of hands and the anointing with oil in Confirmation; with the contrite confession of sins and the absolution of the priest, in the Sacrament of Penance; so it is with all the other Sacraments; that is, what is known as the "matter and form" of the Sacraments do not of themselves have power to accomplish the wonderful effects attributed to them except by their selection for that purpose by Him Who instituted the same—God Himself.

Do not ever yield to the notion that there is little difference between your Church and all others. There is not only a substantial, but actually an "essential" difference not only in their nature and character, but also in the form of worship and ministry. That of the Catholic Church is divine and that of all others is human. Just as Sacraments could not be instituted by man, much less could a Church which pretends to promise salvation to its affiliates. If anything is clear in Holy Scripture, it is that Christ instituted "the" Church, "My" Church, and not churches.

Book Reviews

Essays and Sketches, Cardinal Newman, edited by Charles F. Harrold, New York, Longmans, 1948, 3 vols., $3.50 each.

WHAT a treat it would be, and how it would be hailed by a reviewer, if these volumes were new. They would represent a major event in literary history, beyond a doubt; and even though they are only reprints of Newman's essays, gathered from half a dozen volumes or more of his prose work, they deserve, in this edition under the hand of Charles F. Harrold, to win new readers, and enthusiastic ones.

Everybody with an eye to excellence in English prose at its very finest must be concerned with papers and essays such as these; and nobody with a primary interest in the religious progress of a great spirit can afford to slight this collection, especially in view of the chronological arrangement the editor has given them here. The essays are selected, but they are, for the most part, complete essays; only in one instance does the editor, at any rate, label them as anything less than that, and that is in the instance of the section of the Rise and Progress of Universities. That is selections from the original discourses, and it admits of argument whether the selections do not improve the readability of the original. That in turn means, if accurate, that the enchanted reader will find here some of the choice pages of Newman's prose, and they are pages that no doubt will interest many readers who may find the controversial and apologetic essays hard going; and, to be frank about it, most people do, in spots.

One thing that stands out in the papers as they are arranged here, at least when read consecutively as Harrold evidently means them to be read and as they thoroughly deserve to be read, is the progress of Newman's mind and thought toward the fulness of Catholic Faith in the Catholic Church.

For a reader to whom that is the prime interest in reading Newman, the present arranged edition will be invaluable. The papers are collected from the original volumes called Historical Sketches, Essays Critical and Historical, and Discussions and Arguments; but here they appear in the order in which they were written, and it is fascinating to watch Newman's mind as he reasons and prays himself always closer and closer to the place where at last he knew and admitted what so many others had seen before he saw it, namely, that his soul could find its proper home in faith only in the Church which, for so long, Newman opposed as being a degeneration of the Primitive Christian religion.

One is struck, even in the days when he said and wrote some very harsh things about the Church that was to be his spiritual mother before he had with this world, with the man's utter honesty of purpose and with his fairness. He never would descend to mere abuse, of course; that any honest controversialist should have said of him; what is so striking in this man's spiritual progress was the earnestness with which he seeks to grasp and to understand and

to state fairly the case against which he was bringing his heaviest argumentative artillery to bear. It may be mere hindsight, inspired by what we know did actually happen to Newman, to see more than faint adumbrations of the end in papers as early as some of those in the first of these three volumes, papers like the one on Primitive Christianity, dated 1836 at the latest, or Prospects of the Anglican Church, in 1835, or still more unmistakably, the essay on the Catholicity of the Anglican Church, in 1840. But it is certainly all there to be seen and read now.

It is worth noting that it took Newman five years after 1840 to come home to Mother Church as that essay of that year indicated that he must, soon or late. He says himself somewhere that he seems to have shot his last arrow against the Roman Church in that essay. Granted his acumen of intellect, and his transparent honesty of purpose, and his saintliness of soul, there could be only one end to such a course. He did at last, under the leading of the kindly light, come home; and while one notes the hard and harsh things he said of the Catholic Church in his Anglican days, it is worth noticing as one goes on, too, how patently honest mistakes they were, at their worst.

The observant reader cannot fail to be struck, either, with some wonder, as he reads these religious essays, notably the ones on the Early Church and its Fathers, that it took Newman so long to come at last into the Catholic Church, the Church of Rome, where alone he could find the religion of the Early Fathers. His mind and his spirit were so utterly Catholic a long time before he knew that Catholicity was to be found only with the Church of the Papacy.

There is little reflection here of the terrific impact of Wiseman's essay in The Dublin Review which shook Newman to the foundations of his spiritual life, with its tremendous "Securus judicat orbis terrarum" and all its implications. It is worth noting in passing that it seems to have been that universality itself, rather than Wiseman's parallel with the Donatists, that struck so hard.

Little wonder, however, can it be to any competent mind that when once that axiom was realized and recognized for what it was, the Via Media was pulverized, as Newman himself admitted it was; and then, there could be only one conclusion. He had been, as close observation of these papers as they march along must show, unconsciously afraid much of the time he was arguing his best in favor of Anglicanism and against Catholicism, that his was a lost cause. What he feared proved true; he did have to leave the Establishment and enter the Church of the Popes in order to be honest with his own mind and the cause of Christ, in order to find the religion of Christ; Rome did prove to be right after all, and so, to Rome he came, and wholeheartedly, with complete faith and perfect trust, better aware than almost anybody else of the difficulties to be met, but triumphantly aware, too, that ten thousand difficulties do not make one doubt. Doubts then he had none; he believed; he had come home.

There are samples in this collection of all his varieties of es-

says, from theological disquisitions to personality sketches, notably of some of the Fathers and the Saints; and it is interesting to note that one of his pet saints, along with Saint Paul and David, was John Chrysostom, and not for his abounding eloquence either, but for his great spirit. The closing essay is one of the very best and most readable and interesting. It is a book review, substantially and originally, a review and acutely profound criticism of Seeley's **Ecce Homo.** Newman observes throughout the most admirable controversial courtesy, but his analysis and critique of Seeley's fundamental position, which derogated from Our Lord's divinity, is deadly and completely convincing.

So, if you have read all Newman's essays in their original setting, well and good; read them again; if not, here, in this edition, you will find first-class thinking in first-rate prose—F. J. Mueller.

The Wandering Osprey, Mackinder, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1948, pp. 232, $2.50.

AT last, a good novel, though with a nondescript title. One gets to wonder these days, why all the straining after the unusual in titles; this one should come close to taking whatever prize there is for such things. What a hawk has to do with either the story or its characters, escapes understanding, even with the help of the couplet from Yeats, printed opposite the title page, which identifies said wandering hawk as Sorrow. There is sorrow enough in the tale, but it is not the mainspring of the action, after all.

But no matter; what does matter is the fact that we are given here one of the good novels, and that gets to be a news event nowadays. In the parlous condition of the contemporary novel, notably the Catholic novel, any novel that escapes mediocrity merits attention; and this one does, emphatically. It shows traces of contemporary French influence, too, perhaps most of all Mauriac's, but it is no worse for having a good model, certainly.

The tale is set in a little provincial French town, and the characters are its people, of the middle class, hidebound with conventionality, and abounding in all the notorious littlenesses and pettinesses of small-town life, and the nationality of the town does not affect that of the vices very radically, either.

The writer is an artist in her own quiet fashion. The picture of life in that gossipy little town is a masterly thing, as are some of the characters, and they are not only the main character either. The depiction of Justine's selfish mother, for example, is perhaps the best thing in the story; she is detestable, and yet, the years of real suffering which she has brought on herself have their effect even on her stony selfishness, and it is a good effect.

On the other hand, the agony of spirit to which her hard fate subjects Justine, has an effect on her saintly character, too, and it is not all a good one; she grows bitter, deep down, unconsciously but all the same genuinely, but she is not spoiled essentially; she is too fine for that, and her religion is too real.

There perhaps is the high-water mark of the story: the spiritual standards and "values" are genuine and true; the spirituality in some of the characters and the lack of it in most of them are shown forth in their thinking and their talk and their actions with a deftness and lightness of touch that are most commendable, all the more so because so rare in novels of the day. Here, for once, the spiritual standards are sound, whether honored in breach or observance, and the story of these people, in their greatness and their pettiness, would be valid and convincing, no matter into what language one translates their names and locale.—F. J. Mueller.

Introduction To The Devout Life, by Saint Francis de Sales, edited and translated by Allan Ross, The Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Md., 1948, pp. 272, index; paper $1.25, cloth $2.50.

A Companion To The Spiritual Exercises Of St. Ignatius, by Aloysius Ambruzzi, S.J., The Newman Book Shop, Westminster, Md., 1948, pp. 348, $3.00.

We shall do no more than call your attention to the reissuing of these two works. Father Ross's translation of Francis de Sales has already gained wide currency; Fr. Ambruzzi's work has been reissued at the request of those already thoroughly familiar with it.

Currente Calamo

Continued from page 6

There are at least twenty-five pet cemeteries in the U.S., the oldest and largest having been founded as far back as 1896. Hang on; there is more to come. . .

A pet cemetery in New York boasts a $13,000 mausoleum for two of Mummy's little shaggy darlings, Toots and Toodles; the sorrowing parent (so to speak) was a Mrs. M. J. Walsh.

"Valley of the Quiet" (no yips, no barks, no whining) lies in beautiful San Fernando Valley, also made famous by Bing Crosby; since 1929, over ten thousand people have laid their beloved pets to "rest" there, in services involving hearses, satin-lined coffins, embalmings, crypts, even. (From $250 up, we learned.)

Said the proprietor of this Campo Santo, according to an interview, "Some carry on worse than at human funerals." But, he added philosophically, "After awhile you get so you don't even notice them." That should take quite awhile, we would guess.

Clergymen (God save the mark!) have been known to officiate at some of these exsequies, stooping at nothing to turn an honest penny, no doubt. "Taps" is a regular feature.

Some of the epitaphs, we are sure, will move you, too: "Precious Baby," "Blonde Baby, Little Lamb," "Mommy's Little Girl," "Part of one's Heart lies Buried Here," and (no doubt too deep for tears) the poignant word "Tweetheart."

Now if there were only an expressed philosophy behind it all instead of an empty head or an empty heart which "Tweetheart" left behind, we could better un-

derstand. The ancient Egyptians cared for cats but they wore "their rue with a difference."

Are All Giving?

ARE you receiving regular Sunday contributions from all wage-earners? It should be quite easy to determine that.

Towards the end of December the government released figures showing that there are in the United States 37,000,000 families. A week earlier it had released figures on the number employed during November, and that totaled some 61,000,000.

There should be, therefore, one and three-quarters wage-earners in every family. It is likely that wage-earners, distributed over the country at large, agree with the number of wage-earners to the family in nearly every community. The average parish of 200 families should have 350 wage-earners, and a parish of 1200 families should have 2100.

The Protestant Way

If Catholic priests followed the plan of Protestant ministers they would reach every wage-earner, because the latter do not and could not depend on pulpit pressure, for the plain reason that, if we except the Lutherans and a few of the smaller sects, only one out of three members of Protestant churches go to church with any regularity. How then do pastors get the money needed? They divide their parish territory into very small districts, sometimes even into city blocks and in the rural parishes into precincts. Over these small districts a warden or captain is appointed who knows who are employed in his very small

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area. He calls on each of them personally, and "talks him into" contributing a certain amount a year to be paid in weekly installments (if he attends church regularly) or to him, the warden in monthly installments. Thus he sees to it that the payments will be made, and in soliciting contributions he seeks "proportionate giving" — not leaving it entirely to the church member to decide what he should give.

Nearly all Protestant churches use the bi-pocket envelope, and the solicitor procures pledges for two regular Sunday offerings, one for the parish church and the other for what Protestants call "benevolences." Included in the latter are the Home Missions, the Foreign Missions, the denominational press, colleges and universities, etc.

If Catholics pursued a similar policy it would be unnecessary to have the many special collections which we have in the United States. If all wage-earners contributed an average of twenty-five cents for extra-parish purposes every week three or four times the amount of revenue would be raised for those causes than is now collected—and certainly no one would feel it. Parishioners, we are sure, would prefer that arrangement to the many special collections.

There are priests whose envelope cartons hold as many envelopes for special purposes (mostly parochial) as it does for the regular Sunday collection. Would not the people prefer to have it added all in one envelope, on whose face would be printed the several purposes the offering is intended to cover?

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Protestantism has been forced, in order to keep going, to systematize its financial operations, and the churches raise their money through lay workers who, working in their own little area, also keep the census of the parish up to date. They apprise the pastor whenever any one moves out of the block or whenever another family moves in; and do a dozen other things which the pastor, with the cares of his family, would find it impossible to accomplish. Communists, always a very small minority in any city, follow the same method. It rests with one of them to contact every member whenever there is a meeting, or when literature is to be distributed.

In these matters "fas est ab hoste doceri."

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So there it is! If you run the novena of Perpetual Help in the eastern part of the U.S. you might drop a line to Father James Galvin C.Ss. R., at Esopus, New York, asking for his monthly **Postscript.**

Altar Boy of the Year

SOME one ought to institute an annual award for altar boys, corresponding to the Laetare Medal, the Siena Medal, Catholic Mother of the Year, etc. Anyway, we heard lately of a performance that rates some sort of a medal...

The boy's name is Bob Winter, and he serves Fr. Thomas Roche, pastor of two beaches neighboring Wilmington, N.C.

One Sunday about three minutes before Mass was to start (and only about three minutes before),

Bob made it to the sacristy, a bit winded, a bit disheveled—but there. Having struggled into cassock and surplice, he led Father to the altar for Mass.

Afterward, there was a gentle reminder from the pastor about getting in a little earlier—but consternation at learning how Bob got there at all.

He had swam in from his father's fishing boat—over a mile from shore—and this hadn't been the first time, either. . .

Not All "Misery and Praying"

OUR English brethren are starting clubs with the idea of promoting vocations to the sisterhoods, according to a recent issue of the London **Herald**. And it's not a bad idea, either. Strikes us we could use something of the sort over here.

According to one of the founders, "There are many today who are uncertain as to whether they have a vocation or not; who feel they have a vocation but have not decided which Order or Congregation to join; or who have made their decision but for one reason or another are unable yet to enter, or are waiting for the usual reception date.

"These are the people we hope to help by these clubs, of which there will be a junior, a senior, and a postal section. The idea is to keep alive and inflame the vocations of those who join.

"Courses will be given by experts in church needlework, Latin (this is to make the reading of

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the Office familiar), Plain Chant, and recreation. This last is included because we want to show that the religious life is not all 'misery and praying' as some people think."

Correction

MSGR. NEWTON tells us that his article, the editorial in our November issue, was marred by a serious typographical error. In line 19 of the first column on page 812, the word "mythical" occurs. It should read "mystical."

Ready Answers for You

WE are happy to announce that our Associate Editor, Fr. Lydon, who has been your "ready answer" man since the very beginnings of **The Priest**, has now brought out a new and enlarged edition of his now famous work: **Ready Answers In Canon Law.**

The work has proved to be indispensable and we are sure that the present edition will meet with a welcome reception. **Benziger** is the publisher ($6.00).

Correspondence

Differs with Reviewer

Editor:

The book review section of the September, 1948, number of **The Priest** contained (page 700) a review of the Sheed and Ward publication, **The Sacramental Way.**

Your reviewer of this book apparently has not read it carefully and has failed to recognize its

For the Parish Library or Study Club.

Catholic Faith and Modern Theologies

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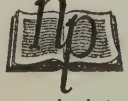

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Correspondence

value. His opinion needs to be contradicted for the sake of your readers, unless perhaps they are already aware of its deficiencies.

Compare the reviews of this book which have appeared in other periodicals. The clergy who are readers of **The Priest** ought to be furnished with book reviews not inferior to those provided by and for the laity.

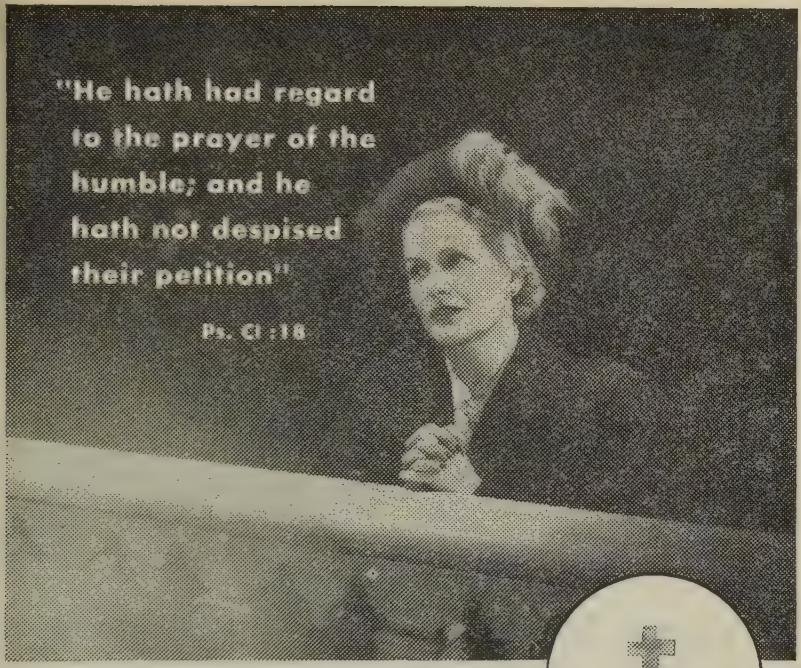
The same September number of **The Priest** contains a review of **The Meaning of Man,** by Jean Mouroux, which agains fails to appreciate a book of extraordinary value.

Very sincerely yours
William Busch
The Saint Paul Seminary
Saint Paul, Minnesota

Suggests Confirmation Pledge

Editor:

WHY is it that when young people come around to arrange for marriage, so few of them can remember the day, month or year of their Confirmation? Is it because there is nothing especially memorable about Confirmation for them except, perhaps, for those who were asked some catechism question? In some places there is not even an episcopal quizz—it is the "speediest" of all the sacraments in its administration, and the candidates for admission into Christ's militia take it passively, without even being required to take a pledge of loyalty to their Commander-in-chief. Much more memorable was the day of their first Communion when they publicly renewed their baptismal vows



During the war years when thousands remained after Mass to pray before the Altar and to light special 7-Day Vigil Lights before the Blessed Sacrament or some favored shrine, the deep-felt desire of the faithful for a special act of sacrifice and a personal offering of public devotion was clearly revealed.

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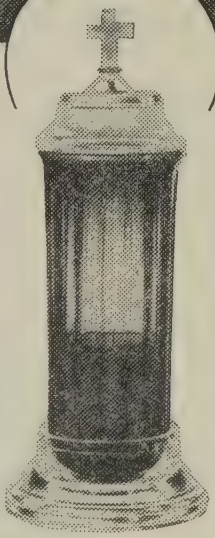
*Vigil Light is the original votive light—it is the registered trade name of a light made only by Will & Baumer.



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and promised "A Catholic I will live and die."

We believe that in America this great Sacrament of Catholic Action could be made more meaningful and memorable by having the group give a public pledge of loyalty to Christ the King, His Vicar and His Church—to which might be added specific promises to engage in Catholic Action for Christ and souls. This would be the most impressive reminder for the confirmandi and all in church, of the duties imposed on them by this sacrament. If this were done, perhaps we would not have so many confirmed apostates a few years after Confirmation. The Holy Ghost does not make anybody an automatic soldier — the soldier must be helped to realize his fighting duties and his sentinel duties, and all impressive aids towards this end should be utilized. Let us see what your readers think of this idea.

Old Pastor

(Enclosure)

Confirmation Pledges

Today I publicly profess allegiance to Christ my King, to His Vicar the Pope, and to the Kingdom of Christ, His Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

As a spiritual soldier of Christ I will take unto myself the armor of God given me today, by the Holy Ghost to fight against the enemies of my soul—which are the world, the flesh, and the devil.

I will daily watch and pray and regularly receive my spiritual rations in the sacraments of penance and Holy Communion.

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I will keep on studying the religion and the rules of Christ my King, and do my best by example and word to bring others to Christ and His Church.

As a loyal soldier of Christ I promise to stand up for all the teachings of His Church.

I promise especially to defend Christ's teaching on the sacred and enduring character of the sacrament of marriage and its use as the first line of defense for Christian homes and a Christian nation.

Come, Holy Ghost, and grant me the fullness of Thy gifts and graces so that I may live and die as a faithful soldier of Christ and help to bring others with me into the everlasting kingdom of Christ in Heaven. Amen.

Signed—James Smith, Soldier of Christ.

Preferably, let some such pledge as this be imprinted on their Confirmation diplomas and signed by them over the pastor's signature. The pledge could be chorused by the class either from memory or from diplomas before or during the closing Benediction.

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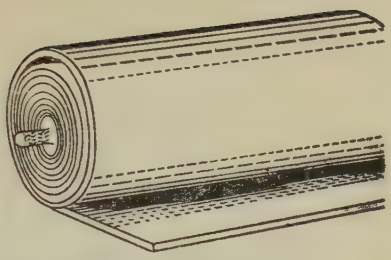

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Pulpit Manners

Editor, **Our Sunday Visitor:**

WE are proud of the great majority of our priests who edify us by their humility, kindness, charity, zeal and self-sacrifice. Their saintly lives give powerful corroboration to the moral truths they preach to us from the pulpit.

There is, however, a not inappreciable minority of priests who unwittingly hurt the religion to which they have dedicated their lives, by their uncharitableness and their unseemly manners in the pulpit. They make assertions about non-Catholics which cause listeners to cringe with shame at the lack of understanding; they use crudities of expression which are decidedly in poor taste from any pulpit.

We are treated to such expressions as: "deserve a kick in the pants"; "give us 'Hail Columbia' "; "too bull-headed to pay attention." Women who find it necessary to go to confession at a time reserved mainly for men are told they are "man-crazy" (most of them, farmers' wives who could come at no other time!). People who must attend the Mass intended for children are threatened with having their names published in the church bulletin, it being the avowed aim of the priest "to embarrass them to death."

The parents of altar boys who are not punctual have their names read off before the congregation (and the altar boys have their ears pulled!). We are shouted at and

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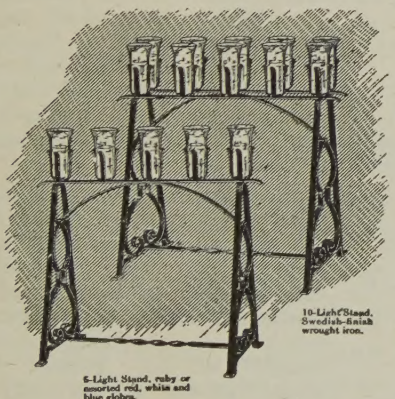

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yelled at and have fists pounded before us—and all this in the presence of prospective converts.

I once had a non-Catholic in church with me on Christmas. She inquired whether our priests always scolded like that. I speak of no particular priest, but of a whole succession of them here and elsewhere. Can you imagine any minister using such tactics to draw people to his church or to the love of God?

Aren't priests taught any of the amenities of life in their seminaries? Is it a case of lacking the softening influence of women which makes them so crude; or, is it that, because they know themselves to be the agents of truth, they feel their own behavior can be autocratic and obnoxious without curb? I consider myself to have a modicum of refinement, and I think most of our parishioners have, yet we are talked down to as if on the level of the street. It is such a waste of golden opportunity! One can safely say that most ministers are gentlemen, at least; it would be hard to say that of many a priest!

The Catholic Church alone has the full deposit of divine truth, the full sacramental system and a moral code which compels the respect and admiration of the world. If these great treasures could only be supplemented by the conduct of her priests, which would mirror authentically the kindness, humility, mercy and love of Christ for all his children, no power on earth could impede the continued advance of Christ's kingdom on earth.

Respectfully in Christ,
H. M. S.

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